A NEW VISION OF ANOTHER HEAVEN

-:- RICHARD W. LEWIS -:-

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A New Vision of Another Heaven

A NEW VISION OF ANOTHER HEAVEN

By

RICHARD W. LEWIS, D. D.

Author of "This Way," "The Other Fellow," "The Meat and Bread Business," "The Devil's Diary," "What's A Man," etc.

"I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold I make all things new."—REV. 21:1, 5.

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PREFACE

THIS is God's book. He has given it. It is not the gift of schools, nor of scholarship. In that case all would have been most different. The author has long been pressed between the nether and upper millstones of sickness, sorrow, trials, tribulations, disappointments and distresses, until but for the Grace of God there had been no heart left to live, much less to labour, in writing this book, the outcome of painful experiences.

Although this is God's book, it is written for *men,* not for "angels." There are not a few "angels" of wisdom and knowledge these days who will, should they deign to read this book, delight to dissect it, and to discover its many defects. They will enjoy reflecting how very differently they see the future life, and how much better they could state their views. Let that be even so. Out of heartaches, out of strains, out of close, prayerful Bible study, out of all nights in prayer, out of satanic persecutions, out of the betrayal of friends, out of the direst poverty, out of long-drawn-out home illness, out of problems so huge none but God

could handle them, out of actual tests of God's promises and most severe trials of His grace, out of early home-teaching and the training of consecrated Christian parents, out of God's love and mercy and goodness and grace has come this book.

As these pages have been written, the writer has been completely overwhelmed with a sense of his utter unworthiness—even to the point of profound humiliation, while at the same time he has been filled with most genuine gratitude to the Giver.

This is by no means a scientific thesis. Nor is it a theological dissertation. It does not pose as a philosophy of future life. Nor is it yet a commentary on certain portions of the Scriptures. No effort is made, save the most casual, to explain the vision. Whatever is unsaid thereabout is not for saying. Some things cannot be said, although fully felt within us.

It is only a vision-statement, made in the language furnished by whatever inspiration, in whatever way, from whatever source, to the writer. Absolutely no claim could be made herein to any erudition. No effort at brilliancy has been essayed. No ambition has been indulged save that to honour God and glorify His Holy Name in helping human beings who grope in the dark and long for the light.

From a child the writer found himself out of sympathy with a vague, ethereal, distant, indistinct, wholly spiritual Heaven. As the years have piled up, the conviction has increased that our future home shall be on this earth. To this view the Bible lends its utterances. That ingenious jugglers shall be able to skilfully display their "sleight-of-hand" tricks to the utter perversion of simple Bible statements, is but to be expected. The most precious doctrines in the blessed Book of books have been so dissected as to become soulless and lifeless. Whoever follows "science falsely so-called" in the study of God's Word, may just as well prepare himself to surrender all that is sweet, spiritual, and soul-strengthening in his religion. (Yet he may live a very consistent and beautiful moral life, as did Cornelius. Acts 10:2, 11:14.)

The "rationalists" of our land, and many of their sympathizers, are dining on husks and will die of dry rot. For such classes this book will hold no interest. They are so wise, they are so self-sufficient and self-satisfied; they are so intoxicated on "a little learning," that they will content themselves with a pitying scoff and a dismissing scowl. They need no help. Not even God Himself is able to aid them! (Matt. 13:58). Their stupendous minds and their

colossal intellects are well able to throw much light (?) on the Bible accounts of the creation, the fall of man, the flood, the Virgin Birth, the Atonement, etc., etc.

"The common people" heard Jesus gladly (Mark 12:37). This land holds many millions of just such people. For the average man, for the usual woman, for the every-day child—for common mortals, this book is published.

But a word of justification: Is it not a fact that God's plans and purposes have always been misunderstood and opposed by certain men who counted themselves leaders of thought? Did not all the scientists, scholars, and leaders of Noah's day deride him, mock at his messages, and spurn his prophecies? Could Lot convince even his own children that God would destroy Sodom? Was not Jesus Himself crucified by the heads of the Jewish Church? Did He not say, When the Son of man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth? Is not scepticism a kind of second nature for humanity? Do not many scholars of our day unconsciously foster personal pride by forsaking the simple and less scientific—the spiritual and soul-feeding interpretations of God's Word? After all, is not the Bible a simple story for common people? Does not this "vision" accord with the Word

of God? That it tallies with the Holy Scriptures, there can be little doubt—it does not conform to many interpretations thereof. That it shall clear up some passages not hitherto fully understood, is to be devoutly sought of the Lord. That it will satisfy many hungry hearts, and solace many longing souls, is the calm confidence of the author, who sends it forth baptized in his tears of joy, and bathed in his daily prayers.

One criticism certain to be offered is that this "vision" of Heaven is too material. Perhaps this criticism may be due to the reader's lifetime impressions of Heaven, handed down by forefathers whose views were less material. After all, has not the Word of God been cited? Does not that Word afford a foundation for the "vision"? Is there no possibility that the old view may be the wrong view?

All the great men of faith are not teaching that Heaven is only a state of inactive bliss, and that saints spend eternity with crowns on their heads, songs on their lips, and harps in their hands. Note what the eminent scholar and world-renowned preacher, Dr. Alexander MacLaren, is credited with saying: The joys of Heaven are not the joys of passive contemplation, of dreamy remembrance, of perfect repose; but they are described thus: "They rest

not day nor night"; "His servants shall serve Him"; "they shall see His face."

The vision of peopled planets will also be challenged by some scientists. Let them do so: the writer prefers to stand with God alone, if scientists object to the company! In Isaiah 45:18 it is said that God formed this earth "to be inhabited." Scientists tell us this is one of the smallest of all the planets. Why should God form this tiny sphere to be inhabited, but create mighty worlds and leave them without an occupant? Such a position is utterly untenable. It does not accord with the fact that God is a God of reason, and invites man to reason with Him (not without Him)!

If the "vision" seems to deal too much in the improbable, let us recall the words of the Prophet Isaiah: "The Lord hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God" (Isaiah 52:10). Let this preface close with the words of Jesus, who came to earth from God to reveal the secrets of God: "The things which are impossible with men, are possible with God" (Luke 18:27).

R. W. L.

Chattanooga, Tenn.

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I

HOW IT HAPPENED

"As a dream of a night vision."—ISAIAH 29:7.

WHETHER it came naturally, and was due to the train of events to be related, or was the result of a spiritual state wherein a supernatural view of the glory-to-be was given me, the reader is left to determine by and for himself. The writer contents himself with this recitation of mental conceptions and spiritual impressions which were his in some way, and which he records here for whatever benefit they may prove to be to those who may read them. In any case, this dream has at least changed the author's theology, and altered his plans and ambitions.

The call came to go from home some 800 miles and conduct revival services in a distant State. While conducting the services strangers came into the audience one night, and sat together in a pew. It was evident that they were no ordinary folk, and that their interest in the speaker was more than the usual. At the close of the service they introduced themselves as blood relations, and a date for visiting them

at their home in a neighbouring town was then and there agreed upon. In this subsequent visit there was much talk about various members of the large family to which all present belonged, and special interest centered in "The Family Tree" being constructed by one member in the circle of kin. The writer was asked later to prepare a certain branch of the "tree." At once he went to work thereon, sending out letters to various members of the connection here and yonder.

The meantime the scene of services shifted to a new field, out in the country. Among rank strangers, in a lonely rural retreat, the mail carrier brought a bunch of letters from relatives, young and old—the eldest my sainted mother's only surviving sister (now past 80), out of a family of thirteen brothers and sisters. The letter told of loved ones long gone across the bar, and of others but recently departed. A letter from a cousin named no less than ten relatives and friends who had lately passed out into the great unseen and unknown beyond. Among these were some very near and very dear to me; while others were the close friends of boyhood's days. Two of the cousins who wrote, although residing a thousand miles apart, spoke identically of being "old women now."

While these reflections were having their meditative effect, it began raining. It rained so steadily for twenty-four hours, including the Sabbath day, that not a service was conducted, not even the Sunday School. The family entertaining me had company, washed in by a flood-tide which stopped their journey homeward, since it had rendered the bridge dangerous to cross. Thus it was that I was left for hours (largely because I preferred to be alone) in my room with my thoughts still lingering on the letters. My mind dwelling upon the large number of loved ones and friends of whose deaths I had just received notice, a downpour of rain during the last thirty-six hours, all service discontinued, alone and amidst strangers—under such trying conditions, what more natural than resort to earnest, persistent prayer. The communion was sweet and reassuring. God seemed to speak in the silence and through the black gloom of that rainy night.

Then the mind took its flight. It ran through the Word of God. It traversed the field of human suffering, sorrow, death; it penetrated the great unseen beyond by the strange powers of its imagination. The struggle was to solve the meaning of life here, the separation, the mystery of life hereafter,—the promise of John 14:21 was claimed. The angry night grew

fiercer; the wild winds swept around the corners of the house; the dying fire in the stove sang its weird song in a minor key; a solitary fly buzzed about seemingly without aim; otherwise all was as silent as death itself. One look out into the darkness, and I drew back with the heart-breaking thought that some traveler might be trying to make his way in the pitch blackness of that awful night of storm and rain. Then there swept over my soul thoughts of that other darkness of the just-out-there, with only a filmy veil separating us from it. My thoughts persisted in lingering in that strange, unseen realm, reported thus far by none other than Jesus, as recorded in God's Holy Word.

Throwing myself down into the outstretching arms of a big rocking chair, the dead of night solemnity without, and the haunting silence within (but for the few noises just named), my own convulsive heart-throbs and bitter sobs ending in outcries of long pent-up emotions, broke the silence within the room and for the moment obscured the sounds from without. Thus giving way to my feelings my soul cried out to God for the revelation, so far as He could trust me, of man's place in the divine plan here, and his place-to-be in eternity. With head thrown back, one hand over my face, and my eyes partially closed, I saw—Eden; I saw it in all its

pristine glory, fresh from the hand of God, the perfection of beauty, the charm-spot of God's foot-stool; the home of the first and only pair (at that time) occupying a place on the earth. Then saw I the sly deceiver of men "slipping up on the blind side" of mother Eve, and I witnessed anew the awful tragedies of the Fall of Man and the loss of a Paradise on earth. That darkness of doubt, disloyalty and deliberate disobedience appeared to me far worse than the physical blackness on the outside of my lonely room.

Then suddenly my eye caught sight of a tiny Star that shone over Eden as the only ray of hope for a sin-cursed, Satan-ruined world. Rapidly on and on through the Scriptures ran my mind's eye, stopping only at great mountain peaks of Messianic prophecies which stand out in all parts of the Old Testament. Then I heard the apostle Paul say, "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound" (Rom. 5:20). There was a race! Sin and grace running in a contest for supremacy, and GRACE won! Grace gloriously triumphant! Praise the Lord for His superabounding grace! Now quickly came the new thought of the *parenthesis of sin!* Because of sin grace has come as a special offset thereto, or as a divine provision therefor. But the sin *will end,* and

then the special favour will be withdrawn; but now, "THE PARENTHESIS OF SIN!"

Back swept the mind, whether naturally, and of its own free will and accord—an automatic action; or whether by special divine urge in the giving of a true vision to a man for men, he who writes does not know, hence cannot say—but back swept the mind into the dim counsels of eternity where it beheld the Creator of the Universe speaking into existence great and wonderful worlds, and peopling them with varying human beings, all created in his own image, another way of saying, man endowed with the power to CHOOSE his course, yet untried, hence to be tested. I was shown one plan for all inhabited worlds. I was given a moving picture of all the thousands of unfallen spheres, whose happy inhabitants had met the simple test of their Edens, in substance the same as our test in our Eden, yet without sin. I saw in these thousands of happy worlds, where no sin had ever entered, throngs of perfect beings constantly in the enjoyment of God and each the other without the slightest semblance of friction from any cause. Their glorious civilizations were untouched and untarnished by sin, and unfettered by transgression; hence had progressed marvelously beyond compare with anything on our earth, and were transcendent

in their dazzling splendour. Then, as if an angel spoke, I heard it said: If these many and mighty worlds have all stood the simple tests of the Edenic probations, and the peoples thereof are thus happy, prosperous and so perfectly contented, who can say that the plan of God in testing His sentient creatures made in His own image, is not a complete success, even if one little world did fail to stand the test and become a wayward prodigal?

Then I saw with a soul-satisfying fullness the infinite wisdom and justice of God, and the perfection of His plan. Into a rhapsody indescribable did my soul take its flight, and the glory of God shone about me thrilling my being with heavenly joy no tongue can tell, no pen can outline, and no earthly experience can approach! "Holy! Holy! Holy! Lord, God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come!" (Rev. 4:8). In the light of that which I had just witnessed, or experienced, an easy solution of hell with all its horrors came to me, and I saw God emerge from the scenes depicted without the slightest scintilla of merited censure because of the lost souls in a burning hell, even if the torment is eternal. For the few lost from the sin of earth are but the tiny drop in a bucket, in comparison with the countless billions of souls on other spheres who have met

the conditions of eternal union with God, resulting in the confirmation of their faith, loyalty and love in perfect righteousness. What plan could do more? What plan could lose less? God has done His best for His creatures. The vast majority of them fully appreciate what He has done in making the test so simple and so easy. If comparatively few fail in the test, surely the Giver of a perfect plan should not be charged with their failure. "The Judge of all the earth will do right." Hell was never made for man. It was prepared for the devil and his angels (Matthew 25:41). But if man will persist in following Satan, then he must inevitably land in the regions over which Satan shall preside throughout all eternity. If man abuses the greatest gift of character God can give him, he alone is chargeable—not his God.

II

"THE PARENTHESIS OF SIN"

"And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."—JEREMIAH 31:34.

MY mind was now fully submitted to the Lord that He might think through me His own thoughts, and show to me the meaning of His blessed plans for man as set forth in His Holy Word. "The parenthesis of sin"—I could not get away from that thought. While debating it in my surrendered mind, there came to me a companion impression—a threefold redemption: of soul, of body, of the earth, through the sufferings and death of Jesus Christ: "Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works" (Titus 2:14); with the Lord "there is plenteous redemption" (Psa. 130:7); "For the redemption of their soul is precious" (Psa. 49:8); "We ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the re-

demption of our body" (Rom. 8:23); "We, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness" (II Pet. 3:13); "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away" (Rev. 21:1).

Spiritual death came first, the soul being dead in trespasses and in sins before the body died. Naturally the redemption of the soul has been entered upon first. Though saved in our souls, we groan in our sin-diseased bodies. Orthodox Christianity has not seen fit to accept the plain statements of Holy Writ as to bodily healing, such as, "Who healeth all thy diseases," although quite ready to accept the former part of the verse, "Who forgiveth thine iniquities" (Psa. 103:3); and again, "Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses" (Matt. 8:17). And yet, with cleared mental skies, and the new eyes given me, I could see it—the body brought under the blood! This was not necessarily, as I saw it, a modern miracle. To me was given to see clearly very natural processes by which the benefits of the atonement of Christ could be applied to the saving of the body. My attention was called to the Lord's own word which says, "Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord

is at hand" (Phil. 4:5). I saw that this meant, among other things, that the Christian is expected to, by the grace of God, hold his body under. Into whatever excesses others may go, the Christian is to be temperate in all things. Whether he "eat or drink," or whatever he does, he is to "do all to the glory of God" (I Cor. 10:31). The manifest presence of Jesus does not add to His infinite power to help men. Though no longer manifest in the flesh, He is still equally able to heal the flesh-man. "I am the Lord, I change not" (Mal. 3:6). "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, to-day and forever" (Heb. 13:8). He never leaves nor forsakes us. He is the good friend of suffering humanity to-day as in the days of His sad sojourn on the earth.

Thus it was that I saw by the Lord's grace we could "present our bodies a living sacrifice," bring them into subjection, and hold them under, until our moderation itself would result in that better health and fuller strength of temperate living. In other words, I saw divine health as something far better than divine healing! Through the observance of these two scriptural admonitions I beheld men living as redeemed souls in redeemed bodies. The scheme, as I saw it, comprehended cleansed bodies, day by day; daily exercise; deep breath-

ing; proper dieting; slow eating; the elimination of all false stimulants; all forms of tobacco banished for the sake of the redeemed body—the temple of the Holy Spirit; full victory over lust, and the withholding of the body from all those places in which the Christian could never expect to find the Christ—and all this "your reasonable service" for the care of that body for which He died on the cross.

Such a soul—saved from sin, living in such a body—redeemed from all rough treatment for the glory of the Redeemer, would naturally call for an environment wholly congenial, and that was shown to me—the earth on which we dwell completely renovated, remodeled, REDEEMED! The air was changed; the seasons were different; extremes of heat and cold were no more; vegetation underwent a tremendous alteration; the leaves of the trees were now really "for the healing of the nations;" the malaria was no more; impurities had departed; all waters were "living waters;" germs had emigrated; disease was dead; sorrow and sighing had fled away; all pain had ceased, and the fountain of all tears had dried up!

Thus I could see in a new light the long train of human suffering and sorrow, pain and anguish which all mortals now share; and the eternal struggle going on everywhere, among

all peoples, to shake off the galling yoke of sin, and the distressing thraldom of Satan. One by one there filed past me in sad, solemn silence the long line of pathetic, if desperate, attempts of men through the added ages to be free. The effort through religion, from Abraham to the cross, and from the cross till now. The sundry shades of religious remedies as offered by Baalites, Babylonians, Egyptians, Grecians, Romans, Christians; sundry "Cults," orders, lodges; Eddys, Russells, Mormonism and "modernism." While the cross stood out and up above them all, even under the magic effect of its crimson drippings, only partial relief had come to suffering humanity.

I saw armed hordes, more than Mohammedan, determined to put down the wrong and lift up the right. There was knighthood in its brilliant bravery defending the weak and supporting the cause of the helpless. On came the gradual evolution of unfolding civilization in all its varied phases. I saw the rise and fall of art with its clutch at man's very heart; and the reign of law under Roman power, just as art rose under Grecian touch. I beheld the birth and growth and dominancy of a mighty educational system, swaying the leading nations, and crystallizing at its best in the haughty heart of the "*iron nation.*" But failure followed them

all. Even when all the forces known to man had centered in the nation of iron will, all was lost, and Germany sank into failure and shame.

Then once more a voice soft as an angel's whispered, Even as the individual must come to the end of his row—the limit of his human strength—and hoist the white flag of helplessness before he can be saved, just so must nation by nation hew out its stubborn, determined way to the end of its strength, and cry out in its utter helplessness before the age shall end, and Christ shall come to cut short the work in righteousness! "For he will finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness: because short work will the Lord make upon the earth" (Rom. 9:28). "Now, therefore, be ye not mockers, lest your bands be made strong; for I have heard from the Lord God of hosts a consumption, even determined upon the whole earth" (Isa. 28:22). In the light of man's utter extremity ("Without Me ye can do nothing") thus seen, the daily newspaper reports of the thousand and one proposals of smart men, great men, rich men, experienced men, good men, and even godly men—proposals by which to reconstruct the home-life; eliminate the social rot; purge politics; reorganize the school system; restore confidence; reestablish industrial,

commercial and financial conditions, brought to my face the smile of pity, and to my heart the throb of sympathy—man proposing a hopeless task! Humanity is not functioning normally at any single activity. "The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint." "Men's hearts failing them for fear of those things which shall come upon the earth." The whole world is sick—sin-sick. "It is Christ or chaos." Apart from Him there is no hope—in Him there is ALL hope. I was shown that unless men of our day shall look to Him, the Great Physician, for recovery, soon shall be heard the crashing of kingdoms, the collapse of systems, and the downfall of nations.

"The parenthesis of sin!" A little space of human selfishness! A prodigal's sporting for a season! For the time stubborn human will thwarting the divine. The divine plans and purposes suspended temporarily. The will of God yet to become supreme. "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." The human will is to be subjugated. Man will yet capitulate, voluntarily. He will see his blunder, confess, surrender. Till then God is helpless without He forces loyalty. The power to choose has ever been man's from the beginning. Whereas he used it once against his God and contrary to his own best interests, he will yet

exercise that same power of choice in coming back to the Father's house. There and then confessing his sins, he will receive full pardon and blessed restoration. Until then man is living in "the parenthesis of sin." Once that parenthesis has passed, human development goes on unhindered unto perfection, that goal which mortals have so long sought in vain under a regime rendering its achievement, or its bestowment, utterly out of the question. "The restoration of all things!" "And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: whom the heaven must receive until the times of the restitution of ALL THINGS, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began" (Acts 3:20, 21). That's it! Then the "parenthesis of sin" will pass—thank God! Till then, "Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it" (Psa. 127:1).

"Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand" (Dan. 12:10).

III

A PANORAMIC PICTURE

*"This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. * * * But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived."*—II TIMOTHY 3:1, 13.

THE continuity of my vision seemed almost interrupted by the touch as if of an angel, pointing to the panoramic picture of the whole earth. In looking I saw the many races of earth seemingly vying with each other in a self-determined destruction of self-indulgence. Drinks, eats, smokes, lusts and pleasures were holding sway with an abandon bound to shock any but the most careless, reckless, heedless of humanity. My normal mind reasserted itself for the moment, for I remembered a table of figures pasted in the back of my Bible. It shows that the American people spend annually for chewing gum, $50,000,000.00; for soft drinks, $350,000,000.00; for face powders, etc., $750,000,000.00; for chewing tobacco and snuff, $800,000,000.00; for cigars and cigarettes, $1,310,000,000.00; for joy rides, races and pleasure resorts, $3,000,000,000.00; for lust, $3,000,000,000.00; for food luxuries, $5,000,000,000.00, making a

total of $25,700,000,000.00! What are war debts beside these enormous extravagances?

In all directions this black scene loomed up. The old and the young; the male and the female; the rich and the poor; the white and the coloured; the wise and the foolish—all were madly whirling in a maelstrom of self-satisfaction. I saw crime increasing all over the world, even in great American cities, at an alarming rate, in some instances by ten thousand arrests in a year. I saw children throwing off parental authority, and at the same time beheld parental neglect of the born, and murdering of the unborn. I saw the child banished from many a home where the lap-dog took its place. In the refined homes of the intelligent rich I saw not more than two or three children, whereas in the homes of the foreigners, the poor, the criminals, there were from six to a dozen, living in filth, sin and shame! Then saw I the inevitable results of the worst conquering the best in time unless a fundamental evil is speedily remedied. As the kaleidoscope of events turned, I saw clubdom crush the light, love and life out of thousands of once happy homes, and in their places little hells set up on the earth. I saw unwarranted extravagance, the gentle brother of greed, engender family friction, and finally fling with cruel heartless-

ness heads of homes behind the bars of disgrace. I saw distressing domestic infelicity hold sway, eventuating in damnable divorces. I saw frivolous, fickle, frolicking young womanhood emboldened and made brazen as it bared itself in disgusting familiarity with men, till woman's highest, priceless virtue died a willing death. I saw greed grow greater till the tyrant mastered all the finer feelings, and murdered man's consideration for man. I saw blatant scepticism stalk forth from the ranks of the Church of God, and scoff cynically at the sacred and the divine. I saw old-time respect for age die, and reverence for the religious fade into bold blasphemy.

Gradually the veil of futurity seemed to open wider, and my astonished gaze caught sight of the international plight. Jealousy boiled, fear fumed, hate steamed, intrigue grew, suspicion increased, treaties were utterly ignored, greed gained the day, selfishness soared, friendship faded, treachery triumphed, Satan seized the reins of national affairs, and demons seemed to usher in pandemonium!

Dazed and confused by the procession of these startling scenes that paraded before my astonished eyes, I became unable to longer fix my gaze steadfastly upon the moving panorama of modern changes for the worse. The auto-

matically closing, tired eyes seemed to give the mind its chance to assert itself in calling up such scriptures as fitted into the awful procession of casualties, catastrophes and cataclysms, and I record them here:

"This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof; from such turn away" (II Tim. 3:1-5). "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but after their own lust shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables" (II Tim. 4:3, 4). "Let no man deceive you by any means; for that day shall not come except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition, who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he, as God, sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God" (II Thess. 2:3, 4). "Now the Spirit

speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron, forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth" (I Tim. 4: 1-3). "But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; and that from a child thou hast known the Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (2 Tim. 3: 13-17).

Then, lo, all was dark! The whole earth seemed enveloped in Egyptian blackness almost feelable. The air seemed heavy beyond much further endurance; a creepy feeling came over me as if hideous ghosts were lurking near. The earth shook, and all on it seemed to be trembling, tottering, crashing, falling. From every-

where, or from nowhere imagination pictured (or was it real?) the approach of creeping spirits of evil, and they seemed to break forth into hellish howls that rent the sultry air. Now lurid lightnings flashed, and mighty peals of angry thunder rent the air. Nature was enraged! Violence filled the earth! Evil appeared to be triumphant! Woes were now pouring out upon the earth. "And I beheld, and heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, Woe, woe, woe, to the inhabiters of the earth!" (Rev. 8:13). "Woe to the inhabiters of the earth, and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time" (Rev. 12:12). It seemed that men were actually being transformed into demons! They began to torment and torture one another with utmost cruelty and hellish delight. God seemed gone; the Churches appeared abandoned, with doors locked—the followers of Christ evidently slackening their zeal for God, "falling away," and forfeiting their good influence upon the ungodly; the reign of Satan seemed imminent; the awful tribulation appeared to be approaching!

But in the climactic hour of that horrible scene which no mortal could portray with pen

or put into type,—a scene of pitch blackness but for the furious flashes of lightning—the light of God's holy word enabled me to interpret this horrible scene of hell-hounds turned loose, and the unspeakable devilish deeds of human horrors now being enacted in the darkness, out of which came pitiable cries of pain and anguish actually soul-sickening! The prophet Isaiah seemed to speak to me, saying, "For, behold, the Lord will come with fire, and with his chariots like a whirlwind, to render his anger with fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire. For by fire and by his sword will the Lord plead with all flesh; and the slain of the Lord shall be many" (Isa. 66:15, 16). Then I could hear Daniel saying, "And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince, which standeth for the children of thy people; and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time; and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book" (Dan. 12:1). This message from Daniel was followed closely by our Lord's own proclamation, sounded out in clear tones, "For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh

be saved; but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened" (Math. 24: 21, 22).

The very sad fact about the Tribulation, at present, is, that Satan has chloroformed multitudes of good people, among them many most excellent ministers of the gospel, so that they do not believe in the early approach of a "time of trouble," as is described in God's Word. They are blind optimists, able to see only "the good." Their daily slogan is, "The world is growing better and better all the time." Thus the basal question of our day is: God's Word, or man's opinion? The pronounced tendency of our time is toward egoism. "The Master Key," "The Unity Circle," "New Thought," "Christian Science," etc., place the fullest possible emphasis on the human will, and claim that by due exercise of man's will, he becomes the supreme shaper of his own destiny. This is, undoubtedly, Satan's shrewd device to destroy faith in God, and to grow confidence in man; whereas St. Paul says, "Have no confidence in the flesh" (Phil. 3: 3).

The only safety lies in accepting the Bible statements that a Tribulation, the horrors of which will surpass anything the world ever has yet experienced, is coming upon the earth, and that all men should prepare to escape it (I Thess. 4: 13-18).

IV

THE FACE OF A MAN-GOD

"I will be like the Most High."—ISAIAH 14:14.
"Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he, as God, sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God."—II THESSALONIANS 2:4.

THEN appeared a picture—the plain outline picture of a man's face. Nothing like it could be conceived. Its hideousness was simply indescribable. Strong lines were intermingled with those of heartlessness and horror. It was an inhuman face. It made one think intuitively of the very devil himself. It was an easy leap of the mind from this face of unspeakable meanness and unsurpassable passion and cruelty, to the Bible picture of the Antichrist. It must be he. It could be none other. The climax of human depravity was pictured before me. It gradually dawned upon me what it all meant. My mind turned now to the Word of God, just as it had so frequently done before during the vision. I recalled the words: "Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first,

and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he, as God, sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: even him whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved" (II Thess. 2:3, 4, 6-10). "And he shall speak great words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and think to change times and laws; and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time. But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end. And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High,

whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him" (Dan. 7:25-27).

Dazed by the wonderful features of this startling vision, I sat in semi-conscious silence and pondered. With my brain whirling in its bewilderment over the awful prospect impressed upon me, as just related, my soul cried out to God for a solution. The answer which came to me I readily recall as now I write: "Well may all these horrible scenes to be enacted upon the earth seem improbable to you, in view of present-day civilization, and the strength and prowess of the great and proud land in which you live—a nation boasting as it does of its history in battle, courage of its soldiery, skill in action, boundless resources, marvelous organizing powers, tremendous commerce, startling financial success, etc., but if God be against a nation, who can be for it? Is your nation not turning away from Him? Have its people not spurned Him? Have they not forgotten His word and forsaken His house? Have they not thrown down the home altars and turned over family reins to the children? Have they not made a gala day out of God's holy Sabbath day? And have they not dealt treacherously with each other? Have they not secretly hated one the other? Have

they not fostered selfishness, cultivated greed, encouraged extravagance, revelled in luxury, and luxuriated in lust? Have they not despised the sacred, surrendered reverence, delighted in divorce, strangled the unborn and slaughtered the living? Have they not outraged God's supreme authority? Have they not defied Him to His very face? Has He not been patient with them? Has He not warned them? Has He not providentially pointed out to them the downfall of ancient nations that forgot Him? Has He not given to them His Word, full of prophecies of the 'last days'? And now if He shall see fit to withdraw His Holy presence from the world which hath already withdrawn from Him, and leave Satan to reign for a period on the earth, after that He has taken up therefrom His own who have loyally served Him, heard His word, and honoured His Son, why marvel at the Antichrist, at the tribulation, at the unequalled horrors to come upon men during Satan's reign upon the earth?"

Thus was I made to understand, in part at least, and my heart rejoiced with joy unspeakable and full of glory over the promise in Holy Writ that God's people should be taken up out of the world before that dark and dreadful day should come, a day about which the Apostle

Paul says, "I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive, and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not go before them which are asleep. For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout and with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words" (I Thess. 4: 13-18).

Then I thought I cried pitiably to the angel to tarry longer, and to tell me the time of the Antichrist, and of the tribulation, and more about what should become of the saints. Somehow I do not get quite clearly the length of the time for the tribulation. The symbolisms were obscuring but the impression made upon my mind was that there should be several years of the Antichrist's reign, and Satan's full control of things on the earth. That which was made clear was that this should be a time of sorrows

and horrors which the combined cruelties of Nero and the Spanish inquisition did not equal, and in comparison with which they would sink into utter insignificance! or, as Jesus said, "Except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved; but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened" (Matt. 24:22).

But that awful picture—of the face, of the reign, of the terrors, of the tragedies, of the distress of men and nations, of lawlessness, of pandemonium, of hell itself turned loose on the earth! I saw it all as the world's black day more dismal than all the darkest nights of earth hitherto. A sense of awful doom was settling down in human hearts, with distress and despair reigning everywhere. The whole earth was being demoralized, while in no relation in life could order and composure be found. The very air was becoming sulphurous and stifling. Evidently the earth was on the verge of some mighty and awful change, some horrible cataclysm.

No longer was the waning church calling for evangelistic services, hence I found myself at home with my family in these trying hours. Even that sweet and sacred realm of the home was being shaken by satanic influence, and

home tenderness, home happiness, and home discipline were all most difficult to maintain.

Then came the BLACK NIGHT—that never-to-be-forgotten night! Clouds were lowering, and stars were shut out. The air was humid and heavy, and promised a cyclonic storm at any moment. I thought we had dined in unusual silence. Our evening prayers were strangely solemn, followed by a significant sense of awe. The good-night kiss of dear children was one of lingering questioning. No one expressed the strange apprehension which each felt and betrayed. Once all in bed, as it seemed, I who write these words could not sleep. The hour was far too ominous. Silent prayer, accompanied with Scripture quotations, seemed to engage me throughout the long, restless, sleepless night. The chickens were crowing vociferously now for the coming dawn. The new day would soon be breaking. The family might as well be awakened to enter upon another day—of what? Depression and dismal questioning? Or would the sun burst forth in a new atmosphere, our heaviness of heart leave us, and our normal spirits return? We shall see.

With all the family up and dressed, my next thought was of the conditions without—what of the night? The heavy gusts came and went. The wild winds sighed, swished and whirled in

a mournful dirge. The heaviness was still awfully depressing. But, look! The clouds were actually parting! And, yonder was really a stray star, struggling out! It seemed a ray of welcome hope in an hour of horrors. Even while I watched and sighed and prayed, the clouds gave way, and the star-spangled heavens brought welcomed relief.

Yet it was a strange sensation—facing we know not what, while conscious that some most unusual event was about to take place. The only similar experience I could recall was that of facing an awful cyclone, heading toward me, it seemed, bringing death and destruction in its path. At that time the thought was one of greatest possible solemnity—what will it mean to soon stand face to face with God? So here the thought was not one of fear, but rather one of strange awe, of wonder, of solemnity—what did the next hour hold for us?

V

MEETING THE LORD IN THE AIR

"Then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air."—I THESSALONIANS 4:17.

THEN far out at some distant point of space was seen a golden glow. I had seen the northern lights, and the Aurora Borealis, but never had I seen anything comparable to this strange light in the heavens. It grew. And it grew not only in area, but in intensity and distinctness. The phenomenon was so very striking that I ran back into the room and called my wife and children to see it. We stood on the wide front porch with our heads upturned, gazing intently at the increasing glory of the heavenly glow. Now in the center could be seen a spot of greater brightness. It, too, enlarged, as if the whole glow with its strange center of greater brightness, was coming towards the earth. In silent wonder we watched. Whatever our thoughts, no one, for the present, dared to speak a word of comment. Perhaps the feeling in each breast was the same—this is the climax of the strange scenes and sensations of the last several days!

Yes, undoubtedly the glow was approaching. And the central figure was now assuming, or perhaps I had better say, showing, shape. The first word spoken was by a child, a little girl of eight summers. "A man!" she ejaculated in monosyllables. All seemed satisfied to accept her impression and remain silent still longer, wondering how much closer the glow with its strange central figure would come to us, and what could be the object of the coming! While such questions were in all our minds, and stirring our hearts, the glow came so much nearer that for the first time the dim outlines of myriads of beings in garments of light could be seen. One of the daughters, a dear lover of music, softly whispered, "That music!" Dim, soft, sweet, soul-touching, came the strains of song. Like the climax of a great crescendo came later the shouts of angel voices, rending the air. "Glory to God in the highest; a sword on earth; battle and blood and death below; peace, and rest, and joy, and victory, and glory above!"

The central figure now became clearer, and so surely was it like unto the Son of Man, that even the baby boy, not over four years old, yet familiar with the pictures of the Saviour, showing a halo around His head, pointed upward, and in baby language cried out, "Bu'ful

Jesus!" Each heart began to leap and throb and thrill with a new and strange ecstasy! Would He come on to the earth? Or, would He stop short in the air? What did it all mean, anyway?

Then there fell on our attentive ears the loud blast of a trumpet that sounded and resounded, till the far-reaching echoes could be heard with wonderful and startling effect. The children all jumped—and who could blame them? The baby screamed and clutched at the mother's side. The older children shuddered and grew pale in the dim starlight brightened by the brilliant glow. Then lo, and behold, from one of the cemeteries of the city, the location of which was easily visible from the hill on which our home is situated, there arose figures—men, women and children could now be discerned in the company. Gabriel had sounded his trumpet, and the dead in Christ were evidently arising from their graves! Up and up, they rise. See, they are going into the glow! And now, behold, in the light of the great glow, even their faces are seen, and how they smile and shine! How they do sing!

Standing in awe, and thrilled with such startling mysteries, the song of saints passing through the air, soothes us and reassures us. "Let every kindred, every tribe, on this ter-

restrial ball, to Him all majesty ascribe, and crown Him Lord of all!" We could hear the old, familiar words. How beautiful! We almost dare to join in the great old hymn, now sung as we never had heard it sung before.

But behold! There they come from the second cemetery of the city! We note the throngs meeting in the air. And now from the National Cemetery come the old soldiers of the nation, not only, but evidently soldiers of the Cross of Christ as well. They are singing, "We are marching to Zion, beautiful, beautiful Zion; we are marching upward to Zion, the beautiful city of God."

Then lo, they come up from the horizon on all sides—each band singing a new song, till the whole heaven is ringing with the resounding songs of saints who have become reembodied, and are now on their way to meet the Saviour in the air. Our own souls are so enraptured that we long to form a part of the grand chorus, and to join in the praise, glory, and honour being ascribed to the Son of God who has come for His saints.

Intuitively we nestle closer together, the five children at home surrounding their parents. Fear is now all gone. Love fills the air. Not a cloud is now in sight, many as there have been —His chariots! Never did the stars shine so

bright or twinkle so perceptibly—away from the glow. Our very hearts seem changed in the twinkling of an eye. The coarser grains of our mortal natures seem to be replaced by some finer texture of being. Somehow we felt ourselves growing more ethereal. The tendency was distinctly upward. There comes another mighty blast of the angel's trumpet, and we thrill afresh with an ecstasy impossible to describe! The sensation that sweeps over our enraptured souls is no longer one of awe, but decidedly one of glory! Then we, too, are caught up to meet the Lord in the air! As a united family we are ascending—and yet not all. Where are the absent from home, dear ones? Ah, there they come! And what a meeting! Old saints of our families long gone from earth, and those just caught up—see them meet, recognize each other, shout, sound out their loud Hallelujahs! laugh, smile, embrace, and praise Him who had made it all possible. Yes, the dear ones (all who are redeemed), are journeying with us.

We arise higher and higher, and fairly shout while passing through the air, "farewell, farewell, sweet hour of prayer," for now all prayer has turned into praise! "Let everything that hath breath, praise the Lord! Praise ye the Lord!" (Psa. 150:6).

VI

GOING TO THE MARRIAGE OF THE LAMB

"And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God."—REVELATION 19:9.

WHAT a throng! What myriads of men, women and children! And look! there is a relative from another town! And see! an acquaintance from another State! We speak, we shake hands, we even embrace—in the air! We cannot refrain. No longer are we able to restrain our joy. One word is on every lip—Glory! We shout it out, and now we do not care. Timidity and the man-fearing spirit have been left behind on the earth!

On, and on we move, ever towards the one center of a great mass of mingling, glorified beings. All eyes are upon the Lord. Every knee would now bow to Him. Every tongue is keen to confess Him Lord of lords and King of kings. But we do not reach Him. He is ever just beyond us, and evidently is leading us

on to some point of destination. Yet it is heaven just to be near Him, and in this happy company of the redeemed.

Our daughters are looking about for their earthly companions. A look of surprise comes over their radiant faces as they recognize, not far away, certain acquaintances with whom they had possessed very little in common, while on the earth. But where are certain of their chums? Chums who tempted Christian girls to enter worldly, sinful circles? Can it be? Not a social high-flier in the crowd? The mind of the father turns, even while passing through the air, to the words of the Apostle John, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever" (I John 2:15-17). The saints in this company have kept their robes clean and white, and free from the wrinkles and spots of worldliness (Eph. 5:27). Only "the wise virgins" are here, going to the "marriage supper of the Lamb." The "foolish virgins" are left behind, in the Egyptian darkness of the poor old

devil-dominated earth, and they must now pass through the terrible tribulation with those sinners who have been so congenial to them! They have run together in "society," why not now suffer together in the tribulation?

The songs continue with our flight. The chorus swells, and "like a mighty army moves the Church of God," "the Bride of Christ," going, Rebecca-like, to meet her Beloved! There is one objective. Our Leader's eye is on the goal. "Where He leads, we'll follow," is now being sung. As far out as the human ear can hear, the tones are wafted in one grand, swelling chorus of beautiful submission to the will and leading of the Master.

Many angels have been mingling with us all the time since we took our flight from the earth. One of these comes near us. We bow humbly before this bright, beautiful heavenly being, and then dare to inquire, "Where are we going, if you are pleased to tell?" "To the marriage supper of the Lamb," the angel replied. Then it was really true! The rumour of redeemed saints has been confirmed by an angel of God! Hallelujah! This one joy is worth all the sacrifices we made on earth for the Master and His glorious cause! Already we have awakened with His likeness, and our souls are satisfied! This is fullness of joy—

so far; our capacity shall increase—it must, for so much is ahead.

Through space—illimitable space! Flying without wings! Moving without effort! That supreme ruler of the man, WILL, even seems inactive. How strange! The compelling force is exterior. It is magnetic in its action. The words of John in his gospel come to mind: "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me" (John 12:32). But many would not be drawn unto Him; they did not get eternal life; they are not with us leaving the world of sin, suffering, sorrow behind, and on the way to "the marriage supper of the Lamb." So, no wonder we are drawn, for yonder is our Magnet—it is JESUS, blessed JESUS! He is the center of every will in this throng, the idol of all its hearts, and the propelling power of this Bride-to-be of the Lamb.

On we speed, with no air-currents to interfere; with no atmospheric storms to impede our progress. Nor are there any chilling winds to cause discomfiture. Where He goes it is Springtime! All elements obey Him. He, the Giver of all laws, governs those laws at will.

What a bridal party is this! It is the climax of all the bridal parties that ever functioned before! And the Bridegroom who is leading on is the concentrated essence of all manliness,

the quintessence of all strength, and the acme of all greatness—the one perfect Bridegroom! Even so, in this marriage supper of the Lamb is a full consummation of all that is beautiful, lovely, charming, heart-thrilling in matrimony.

"See! See!" shout the shining hosts ahead of us. All eyes are now riveted on some new glory. What light! It is brighter than the sun, but without the sun's harshness. It is soft as the moon, but without her tameness. A brightness that illumines gloriously, yet never shuts the eyes of the beholders. How wonderful! What can it be? But look! We are going right toward it, and, indeed, into it! Then appears the dim outlines of a new world. Swiftly passing through space, we can soon see the details of a portion of this planet, resplendent with its effulgence. High mountains loom up in the distance far ahead of us. Plains seem to spread out at their feet. Faster and faster we flit through the air, and closer and closer we come to this marvelous stranger-world, all so new to us, though venerable with age, as we later learned. The sight we see fills us with wonder, admiration and awe. And what ecstasy! The first sight of the ocean is nothing compared to it. The inspiration of some Pike's Peak summit is insignificant in comparison. The sensation is unlike anything we have ever

before experienced. Astronomers have created a big world sensation on discovering a new star through the telescope; but we are beholding a new world with our own eyes, so near at hand that we actually begin to view its very details!

Then a strange sound falls upon our ears, and a new thrill fills our souls. It is the music-song from the new sphere. But what voices! In no respect is there the least detectable defect. All is perfect. These voices could never have been tainted with disease, nor tarnished by sin's touch. Nor is there any lack of volume. All parts, too, are there. Such a chorus! The whole is sustained with some kind of musical instrument, but no pipe organ ever produced such strains as that! How far away could such music be heard? It must be very far removed from us as we move on towards it. Both in the exalted conception of the musical theme, and in the marvelous sweetness of its melody, this music is simply entrancing —for it is *perfect* music! Some of the trained and skillful musicians of our immediate party now made a most interesting discovery—there was not a minor note in all the scores! Every note is optimistic! The thrill of a victory march characterizes it. No wonder! This is that unfallen planet which first stood the test, and throughout it remained loyal to God, there-

fore never fell! Hallelujah! Here Satan was more than matched. No sin has ever entered here. Bless God, He has not been deserted by all His sentient, intelligent, responsible creatures. Here are some to whom He gave the power of choice, and they have used it well, and for His glory, and for their own eternal happiness. The little earth just left by us was the only prodigal planet—thank the Lord! All the thousands upon thousands of loyal planets have stood the test, and thus proved the infinite wisdom of God's plan. This is doubtless a part of those "other sheep" (John 10:16) of whom Jesus spoke lovingly and tenderly, and we are to meet with them soon, and they, doubtless, He will bring with Him as later He goes to the old earth to make out of it "a new earth."

It is on this aged, honoured and long-glorified planet that the marriage of the Lamb will take place. And just to think! we are nearing the location of that transcendent scene! And, blessed be God, we shall have some part in the unfolding glories of that occasion! He is now leading on His Bride, the Church which He redeemed with His own blood out of all tribes, kingdoms and peoples! To the holy altar we are going, where we shall be united in the highest bonds of holiest wedlock with our beloved Bridegroom! Hallelujah! Amen, and Amen!

VII

THE MARRIAGE SUPPER OF THE LAMB

"Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him."—REVELATION 1:7.

WE are reaching the planet! And such creatures! They have come now within our ranks, and they and we are mingling as if old friends had met. Or, I had better say, as if some older brothers and sisters were now meeting some younger ones they had never before seen, yet readily recognized them, and most cordially welcomed them as well-beloved guests. "Brother and sister," did I say? And yet how could we dare to claim kinship with such pure beings? In form somewhat like unto ourselves, yes; and yet different, oh, so different! What that difference was, we could sense better than define. Perhaps it was akin to that great gulf between the master-scholar and the illiterate child. Or maybe it could be more nearly expressed by the abyss between the immaculately pure, and the debauched criminal.

And yet our robes were now white, and a new expression was on all our faces, and we realized as never before that we had been cleansed from our earthly, fleshly impurities by a bath in His blood! That we were, indeed, "redeemed by the blood of the Lamb." That the stain of sin was now gone—O, if we could only lose the sting as well! A sting rendered severer by a comparison of ourselves with these pure beings before us, who never having sinned, were confirmed in righteousness and true holiness, and were now, and for a long time past, the glorified beings we were only just now beginning to be. Had we not "in the twinkling of an eye" been "changed"? And were we not fully conscious that "this corruption" had already put on "incorruption," and "this mortal" had "put on immortality," so that we could even now exult in saying, "Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (I Cor. 15:57). Yet there was the difference!

It was beautiful and glorious of these wonderful creatures that they showed no sign of any consciousness of the difference between themselves and us! Joyously they greeted us, and with evident pride of the holy kind pointed to their magnificent city, and as we approached the nearer, they volunteered to explain to us the

plans of the great wedding ceremonies in which we were to take so honoured a part. Once in their glorious habitation, we found ourselves most hospitably entertained. The comforts, luxuries, ease, peace, harmony and ecstasy of our new surroundings were experiences no mortal could comprehend without seeing them. "For since the beginning of the world men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, beside thee, what he hath prepared for him that waiteth for him" (Isa. 64:4).

But as I saw the glorious city in my vision, it was a real city, with wide streets and straight, lined with the most magnificent buildings, the architecture and outlines of which were perfect, and perfectly entrancing. Not one harsh line could be found. Nowhere did colours clash. A sky-scraper did not overshadow a shack. All was in complete harmony. Everything had the most finished appearance imaginable. We could think of no change of addition or subtraction.

Surrounding this city, as I was given to see it, were mountains lofty, grand, wonderful! With their tall peaks towering heavenward, there was, nevertheless, no capping of snow! No timber line could be seen. The verdure thereon rounded out with grandeur complete. But I saw plains, too, and one of these in par-

ticular stretched out from the foot of a lofty mountain toward, and beside, the city, overlooking it. It was on this tableland, the inhabitants explained to us, that the ceremonies were to take place. For the august occasion an immense outdoor temple had been built. Stately columns fringed the edge, and a great rostrum had been constructed in the center. This plain was so vast, as it ran up to be lost in the mountain slope, and stretched out in two directions away from the mountain and the city, that no mortal could well calculate its seating capacity. Or, more properly, I should say, standing capacity, for on this glorious occasion no attendant could allay the ecstatic thrills sufficiently to be satisfied seated! It was to be an hour of life and action unprecedented in the history of the entire universe of God! It would be characterized by unparalleled splendour. Jesus was here to receive and wed His Bride!

On entering the city we had noticed it was in gala day attire. There was no "white way," for none would stand any chance to shine in such a glory-light as was here. What was it? It was utterly unlike any light of the earth. And it was continuous, reminding us of the promise for our future earth—"there shall be no night there" (Rev. 22:5). The whole great city was decorated. Streamers and ban-

ners and flags were flying everywhere—red, white and gold. The streamers were red, as if dipped in blood, the banners were of the purest white, as if symbols of purity, and on them was the one word LOVE, reminding us of "His banner over me was love" (Songs of Solomon 2:4). The flags were apparently made of gold cloth, and glittered in the soft light of the brightly illuminated city. On these flags were four words, "More precious than gold," reminding the Bible student of first Peter 1:17.

But far more noticeable than the decorations were the delegations. These seemed to be associated in groups, all happy, smiling, singing. They were differently attired, while all of their costumes were radically different from our own. Evidently these were delegations from different unfallen worlds, all here to attend the ceremonies of the marriage of the Lamb. On inquiring we were told that these were, indeed, dignitaries, nobles and princes of far-apart spheres. They would be assigned parts in the ceremonies soon to follow.

Then, as if by unanimous consent, every one on the beautiful streets stopped, and all heads were bowed for what seemed to me about five minutes, then with uniformity of action every head was raised and turned towards the sky, as we of the earth would say; and a sight never

to be forgotten was beheld. High up in the heavens could be seen a light brighter than that of the sun by a thousand times, yet so much softer that it did not hurt our eyes. Soon shining creatures were discernible, in constant motion around some central figure. Then heavenly music, first very soft and from a great distance, evidently, was caught by our attentive ears. As the mighty host descended, the figures became more distinct, and so did the music. Down to the great plateau now came the procession, the central figure being the Lord God Almighty, surrounded with the greatest beings of His creation! Jehovah and His Hosts of glory! Now on the plateau platform in solemn, unparalleled grandeur and dignity, God the Father, God the Holy Spirit, and God the Son meet and sit upon their thrones of unspeakable beauty and transcending glory. Choir after choir bursts forth in anthems of praise. Between these songs come shouts of "Glory! Glory! Glory to God in the Highest. Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Amen and Amen."

Before we could fully realize what was taking place, all the saints from earth were being assembled by angel escorts, amidst the cries of loud amens, and the shouts of hallelujahs from the mighty throng. No one wept, but rather bright, beaming faces flashed fire of joy, and

tongues shot forth shouts of praise, while the joyful laughter, in ripple after ripple, sounded like ten thousand silvery bells of gladness.

Gabriel on the one side, and Michael on the other side, led forward the Bride of the Lamb of God till she stood in her immaculate garments of light and love and victory before her espoused Bridegroom. Then "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world," arose in His divine dignity, but beautiful, graceful, becoming cordiality, to greet His beloved Bride. Then an angel of the highest rank, whose name was not revealed to me, spoke out in the clearest, sweetest, most touching tones: "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to Him; for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of the saints. * * * Blessed are they who are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb" (Rev. 19:7, 8). All the host of angels in attendance then fell upon their knees, and said in the most perfect unison: "Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God forever and ever, Amen" (Rev. 7:11, 12). Down upon her knees went the Bride of Christ with utmost grace and ease,

while the Bridegroom lovingly put forth His pierced right hand and lifted her up, saying, "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee" (Isa. 60:1). "Behold, thou art fair, my love; Behold, thou art fair, thou hast doves' eyes" (Song of Sol. 1:15). "Thy teeth are like a flock of sheep that are even shorn, which came up from the washing; whereof every one bear twins, and none is barren among them. Thy lips are like a thread of scarlet, and thy speech is comely; thy temples are like a piece of pomegranate within thy locks. Thy neck is like the tower of David, builded for an armory, whereon there hang a thousand bucklers, all shields of mighty men. Thy two breasts are like two young roes that are twins, which feed among the lilies." "Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee" (Song of Solomon 4:2-5, 7). Whereupon the Bride replied: "I am my Beloved's, and my Beloved is mine: he feedeth among the lilies" (Song of Solomon 6:3). He is "the chiefest among ten thousand"; "He is altogether lovely" (Song of Solomon 5:10, 16). A moment of the most awe-filled silence ensued. Then there came forth one of stately form, wonderful in face—filled with light and love, who deliberately stepped up towards the Bridegroom with calm as-

surance and becoming dignity. All eyes were at once riveted upon him. He took his place close up to the Master's side. He spoke: "He that hath the Bride is the Bridegroom: but the friend of the Bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the Bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled" (John 3:29). The sweet voice of the Bridegroom said, "Verily I say unto you, among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist" (Matt. 11:11). Then we all knew it was the Bridegroom's "best man"—John the Baptist, the forerunner of the Christ on the earth! Another pause of solemn, almost feelable silence and awe, then a strange VOICE, one that had shaken the earth with oftentime thunders of wrath, now in the mightiest, yet tenderest tones, spoke out: "As the Bridegroom rejoiceth over the Bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee" (Isa. 62:5). The response came from the Bride: "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God: for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels" (Isa. 61:10). Grand old Gabriel, he who had heralded the coming of the King

to earth in the humble mien of a man, spoke: "The voice of joy, and the voice of gladness; the voice of the Bridegroom, and the voice of the Bride; the voice of them that shall say, Praise the Lord of hosts: for the Lord is good; for his mercy endureth forever" (Jer. 33:11).

There was one more of those peculiar pauses, portending, as we had come to learn, some act, or some word of supreme importance. The silence was broken as the Holy Spirit pronounced the climactic word of the ceremonies which would forever seal the union between our Lord and His Bride. He said: "Thy Maker is thy Husband; The Lord of hosts is His name; and thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel; the God of the whole earth shall He be called" (Isa. 54:5). "Amen, and Amen," rang out from ten thousand times ten thousand angel voices in an anthem full of hallelujahs and praise to God in the Highest! Then there joined in perfect unison the voices of the delegations from the many unfallen spheres, and those of the redeemed of earth—the Bride of Christ, making ring as it never had before rung, that grand old song of the poor, sin-cursed earth, namely, "All hail the power of Jesus' name." The mighty volume of song whirled and swept and gathered strength, till it rent the air and pierced the skies as we of the earth

would say. The love and peace of God that passeth all understanding seemed to surge through our heaving hearts, and to fill our souls with a rapture beyond the power of mortals to portray, for heaven itself had taken up its abode in the bosoms of the redeemed of the earth!

What a supreme hour was this! Nothing like it had ever taken place so far in our lives. Yet, about this hour we had read; to this hour we had long looked forward; in our moments of religious rhapsody we had experienced a foretaste of glory, but in reality our wildest dreams were far surpassed. Now our burdens of earth seemed light; now our crosses lost their weight; now the sacrifices we had made for Jesus seemed insignificant; now the hardships of the sin-life were all past, and our persecutions and privations, temptations and tribulations were over—the glory-life had begun!

To be a part of the Bride of Christ; to be actually in the presence of Jesus; to live far apart from sin; to feel the thrills of glory in our souls—that was Heaven! Not that we were now in our Heaven, but that Heaven was now in us! How blessed! Such an experience of unspeakable bliss was well worth all it had cost. We had awakened in His likeness, and were perfectly satisfied! (Psa. 17:15).

VIII

THE BRIDAL TOUR

"The voice of joy, and the voice of gladness; the voice of the Bridegroom, and the voice of the Bride; the voice of them that shall say, Praise the Lord of hosts: for the Lord is good; for his mercy endureth forever."—JEREMIAH 33:11.

PERHAPS careless mortals of earth have little realized how very far they are reflecting the facts of heaven, God's home, in their daily lives. When we stop to think, God is a Father. Perhaps the Holy Spirit is the Motherhood of the Godhood (Isa. 66:13, compared with John 14:16, 26; 15:26, and 16:7). And we know that Jesus is the Son of God. Paul says: "For this reason, on bended knee I beseech the Father, from whom the whole family in Heaven and on earth derives its name," etc. (Eph. 3:15, Weymouth's translation). Thus it is evident that our family life is taken from the heavenly. Husband, wife, marriage, wedding suppers, are all ideas expressive of heavenly relations and actions.

Therefore it is not strange that this grand and resplendent scene should have broken up

just as earthly weddings break up—to begin a bridal tour! All the bridal tours of earth, those of princes and crowned heads, those of the very greatest price, pomp and splendour, have their climax in the tour of the Lamb and His Bride. Just as in earthly marriages, so there were on this holy, and blessed occasion, greetings, congratulations, conversations and statements of plans for the wonderful tour to take place.

The angel Gabriel and the great John seemed to have in hand all the details, and they laid before us the course the divine Bridegroom had chosen for His bridal tour. Another long and wonderful journey was to be made, and without the slightest jar, hitch or friction. The plans would go through without any slips or misses. There would be no trains, nor steamships, nor automobiles, nor flying machines. Through space we were to pass with the same ease, and by the self-same power which bore Jesus up and out of sight when He ascended to His Father and to ours.

Amidst the loud swelling chorus of the mighty hosts, as if by the most perfect understanding, we swept out into space and sped away swiftly toward worlds unknown to mortals, now united forever to their Redeemer-Husband. Planet after planet was visited, each one filled with "just men made perfect" (Heb.

12:23), who needed no repentance, for that they had not sinned. All had been confirmed in righteousness, holiness and peace, in their Eden experience, when they believed God, obeyed God, were loyal to God, rather than to the tempter. While all these strange and marvelous creatures bore a striking resemblance to ourselves, there was very much variety among them, and all different from us. And their civilizations were incomparably greater than ours. There had been no sin in the way of advancement. No "fall" had impeded their progress. No hatred had ever been in their hearts. No jealousy, no envy, no competition had retarded their growth and development. No wonder they had advanced so marvelously.

As the redeemed of earth visited these unfallen spheres, great lessons were learned. And that which was being learned would soon be used in the new earth-life to be. With Satan bound at first, then cast later into the bottomless pit, there to be sealed forever, so that he could come forth no more to tempt and retard the nations of the earth, a new and glorious civilization would spring up where sin once abounded and progress had been made so slowly.

On each and every planet the Bridegroom and His Bride were received with a mighty

ovation. The greatest possible preparations had everywhere been made to receive us. The splendour of each civilization untouched by sin, was on display. Mighty choruses always sang us a welcome; gigantic organs, radically different from our own, were made to swell with glorious melodies. Happy, admiring, adoring, worshipping lovers of our Lord always met Him and shouted aloud His praise. Angel delegations preceded us, and world-delegations came forth to welcome us. Each world visited stopped its busy activities to take part in the most colossal celebrations these unfallen spheres had ever before united in giving. One thrill followed another, one experience of rhapsody gave place to another, till the sin-freed saints of earth were intoxicated with the joys of salvation and the glories of being redeemed! How little seemed the sacrifices of earth now! How small was the price paid for these holy privileges and experiences! How could we ever repay Him for these unspeakable ecstasies! How glad were we that we had surrendered all to Him and for Him, not to think now of the glories to be later unfolded in our lives on the redeemed and renewed earth!

And the wonderful Jesus! No wonder Paul said, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things

which God hath prepared for them that love Him" (I Cor. 2:9). While on earth we could appreciate the Spirit's efforts to reveal the glories of Christ Jesus unto us. Now, however, we saw Him face to face—always GREAT, always "High and lifted up;" always of royal dignity; never commonplace; but equally always wonderfully tender; easily approachable; never curt; ever gentle, loving and sympathetic; and always teaching. The plans for the coming inauguration of His kingdom on earth He outlined in all its details. The gigantic work of reorganizing the earth's civilization—now so shaken and shattered to pieces that pandemonium reigned in all parts of His sin-torn footstool, was explained to us, and we saw from the many examples of sinless civilizations something of what would be on our little planet when Satan was bound, and the saints should inherit the earth. The very secrets of His dear, divine, lover-heart He seemed to reveal, reminding us of His tender admonition of His earthly career: "Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am there

ye may be also" (John 14: 1-3). We came to know Him. We could understand Him now as never before in studying Him through His word. We were now one with Him, as He had prayed the Father we might be: "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold thy glory, which thou hast given me; for thou lovest me before the foundation of the world. That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee; that they also may be one in us" (John 17: 24, 21). So, He was now ours, and we were His. His life was ours, His plans were ours—we were truly one. Even His work and His glory had become our own; how wonderful and how glorious; Hallelujah! Let the Lord be magnified! (We who were, or had been, Presbyterians and Episcopalians, actually forgot it, and all joined in proclaiming His praise and making it glorious!)

Not a few in the great throng constituting the Bride of Christ did not experience so great a change in relationship to Jesus, or understand Him so much better than formerly; for they had studied His word while on earth closely, prayerfully, spiritually. Their lives had been so completely laid on the altar of perfect devotion to Him, that they underwent much less of a change in association with the Saviour. The

many hours of sweet communion on earth with Him; the sacrifices made for Him; the sufferings undergone in His name—all had combined to render them more easily susceptible to His influence, and to enable them to understand His meaning. It was paying them now to have cultivated the Christ on the earth, through the study of His Holy Word and constant communion.

One most delightful feature of the tour was the familiarity with conditions everywhere of our own dear ones, whom we had met, and who were now with us constantly, but who had left us on the earth—some long years ago, others more recently—and who had spent the intervening time visiting and inspecting and closely studying these planets whereon we were, and many others, in fact. They knew these unfallen spheres better than they knew the poor old world they had left in death. They knew the inhabitants, too, and understood their language (only one for them all—the language of Love!), their customs, their manner of life, and their great and glorious civilization, thoroughly well; and they took great delight in teaching us, and were our interpreters. For, strange to say, the citizens of these new worlds could understand our language, but we could not theirs! On inquiring about it we found this would come

later, in the course of our development, and full glorification.

One of the puzzles of our earth-life was now solved for us. We had seen so many of earth's bright ones depart. We had so often yielded up our very brightest and best; even our most religious loved ones—those whom we so much needed in the home, in the Church, in the community, in the State, and in the civilization itself. But now how clear! O what relief! Here they were, advanced students of century-old, yea, millenary civilizations of sinless spheres, becoming skilled in the arts and sciences of these wonderful worlds, and would in due time return to the earth with us and there introduce all of the best things they had gleaned during long years of close study. Thus they reminded us of the many bright students from China and Japan who had come to far-away America to study our western, advanced civilization, and then to return to their beloved lands to introduce the best elements of our national progress.

Now we understood Jesus our loving Lord, as He said, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things. Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord" (Matt. 25:21). Not that this passage is appropriate

here, but that its principle is applicable. These brightest and best of our dear ones were best fitted to make these new-world studies, and then to become leaders in the process of reorganizing and reconstructing our civilization.

We found that our darling babies knew more than we did, for they, too, had swept through planet after planet, seeing, learning, growing, developing, maturing. Strange to say their memories had been so quickened that they recalled every detail of their earthly lives, and as I pressed to my heart the lovely form of my own first-born, I saw all the beauty and innocency and grace of those long-ago babyhood days in the midst of which she left us. She remembered well her nurse, and surprised me by calling her name. When on earth she had been a great lover of the lilies and she spoke to me of the lilies they had in the beautiful worlds which she had been visiting all these years. Another little darling of some six summers had years ago left us, and she who had slipped away from us beside the seashore which she so much loved, still saw every rippling stream and silvery surface of lake or pool.

It was astonishing to find that the hosts of earth, scattered over so many beautiful worlds, nevertheless kept informed as to our earth. I thought, in my vision, that I asked my own

parents how the saints in the glory worlds could know of the wrongs, injustices, sins and sorrows of earth and yet be so contented and happy. "Full and satisfying sense of God's infinite JUSTICE, my son," was my father's reply. Since then I have been trying to digest that answer, and the more I think of it the more easily do I see the wisdom of it. All else is swallowed up in a clear sense of divine justice!

Visiting one of the great planets, my mind turned to the thought of degrees, and as I met some from earth who had been untaught and untrained, I could not but wonder how they stood in this regard. As might be expected, I found that their wits had been wonderfully sharpened, and yet they were not leaders, but followers, there as here. While they all were evidently happy, yet I could see a vast difference in their respective capacities to enjoy the marvelous opportunities they were being offered.

When we reached Mars it was actually laughable to hear the inhabitants talk of their amusement over the people of our planet trying to signal them. They could have understood us, interpreted our signals, for already they were cognizant of earth's conditions; but never could the denizens of earth have understood the sig-

nals from Mars, the conditions being so radically different, and we having nothing in terms of which to interpret. (While this is admittedly unscientific, it is given only as a vision, and not as a scientific statement.)

Speaking of things being different, the light was different, the air was different, the water was unlike our own, the minerals different, although possessing many qualities similar to, or the same as, ours. Their building materials were radically different from ours, and their architecture wholly unlike our own. We saw, for instance, no houses with chimneys, for there was no cold! There were no electric-light factories, no ice factories, no repair shops, no second-hand stores, no drug stores, no undertakers, no tomb-stone makers, no signs of doctors or lawyers, and no beautified, silent city of the dead! As it began to dawn on us that all these, and many other common sights of earth, such as hospitals, "Homes," etc., were absent, our hearts overflowed with joy, for it also began to steal into our hearts that soon our own earth would be without all these! On every hand conditions were so radically different from those on our little earth, that we could easily see how that many of the deductions of "science falsely so called" might be far from the truth. My own mind ran far away to the

earth and its many preachers who have seen fit to put in a good deal more time studying "science," than at Bible study, hence were presenting to their congregations speculations of men, rather than the plain statements of Jehovah God.

As before stated, the inhabitants of these unfallen worlds were fully conversant with earth conditions; and as we were not able to see and know what was taking place on the earth since we had left, for we had not been fully glorified, as we had not up to this time ascended to the Father, we enquired of the people on one of the planets we were visiting concerning the state of affairs in the world. It was a horrible picture presented to us, yet all agreed that it was comparable to the prodigal in his hunger, rags and shame; and that the return home—the coming back to the Father's house, by the human race—could only take place after mortals, like the prodigal himself, "had spent all." Again "man's extremity" would be "God's opportunity." Once sin had done its worst; once man had reached his limit, then, and not until then, would he be ready to acknowledge his helplessness, his dire need of God's help, and his utter ruin without it, hence cry aloud for mercy. Then God could and would cut the work short in righteousness: "For he will

finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness, because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth" (Rom. 9:28).

As the scene of horrors was presented to me I give it to the reader: "The time of Jacob's trouble" had come; "the last days" were dawning; already the "falling away" was felt in all parts of the world; "evil men" were waxing "worse and worse;" Satan was turned loose on the earth, and he and his hell-hounds were rending the hearts of men, revelling in sinful riots, and bending every effort towards the destruction of the world-civilization. The "tribulation" was on, and all the worst elements in man were showing themselves. The air was full of lies; thefts were committed hourly without the slightest compunction of conscience; women were no longer respected, but violated on every hand; little children were the victims of the most cruel tortures; liquor had returned, and men, women and children revelled in shameful debauches by day and by night; murder was most common; courts of justice were utterly unknown; nothing sacred remained; the house of God was closed, locked and barred; pandemonium reigned supreme, as would naturally be expected with the Holy Spirit departed from the earth, and the Church of Christ absent with her Lord.

The nations of earth were constantly at war, cutting each the other to pieces; cruel strife, heartless treachery, devilish dealings and hellish hate characterized the relations of nations. Humanity had failed, man was now ready to confess his utter inability to save himself, hence was crying out for superhuman help! Then came into my mind the words of Paul in Hebrews 10:34-37, "Knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance. Cast not away therefor your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward. For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. For yet a little while, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry." In that blessed promise was the only vestige of hope for a now godless world. "Behold, I come quickly," rang in my ears. "It is Christ or Chaos," and without Christ or His Church it was now chaos!

IX

"IN MY FATHER'S HOUSE"

"In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself." —JOHN 14:2.

THE bridal tour being now at an end, after these several years of journeying from planet to planet, in my vision we returned through the wide expanse of infinite space towards "my Father's house."

Even now as I write I can recall how full my mind was of exciting imaginations as to the glories soon to be revealed. Anticipation is one of the joys of most mortals. The heart without hope is a dead heart. The things to come should ever lure us onward. "Forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before" (Phil. 3:13), says Paul. And yet so many of God's dear children have such unfortunate alertness in memory, that they make themselves actually miserable by living in the past! It is well to hold in mind the good things, but

never the evil. Our faces must always be turned toward the King in His glory. God is good; we must face Him with only good thoughts in our hearts.

But here we were going literally into the very presence of Jehovah God! Where would we find Him? What attendants would surround Him? What would be the awe-inspiring scenes about Him? What would be our first sensations on seeing Him? How would He look? How would we act? What would He say to us? What replies would we make to Him? These and a thousand other questions were surging through our minds when a glory transcending all I have tried to describe hitherto, dawned upon us; and our guides informed us that we were approaching that one world which stood out above all others of God's creation, in greatness, glory and splendour. For this was God's world—the center of the entire universe of God, and on it was His abode, and His throne who filled yet all space and occupied all spheres with His infinite, unthinkable, divine presence and glory!

The first thing we heard on approaching the resplendent throne of divine glory were the words, "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come" (Rev. 4: 8). Then as we came nearer, we be-

held "the four and twenty elders," arrayed in garments of glory, prostrated before the throne —"the four and twenty elders" who "fall down before him that sits on the throne, and worship him that liveth forever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour and power; for thy pleasure they are and were created" (Rev. 4: 10, 11).

Then in the blazing glory of God's wonderful world were scenes and sayings "unlawful for man to utter" (II Cor. 12: 4). Let the reader here pause a few moments in most solemn silence, and with closed eyes sweetly commune with that glorious God whose short association with Moses, the mortal man, made his face to shine until those who came near him must ask that he veil his face! (Exodus 34: 30, 33). Some earthly scenes are too sacred to permit discussion; how much more sacredly must the scenes of such heavenly glory be safeguarded. Suffice it to say, "Mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of Hosts!" (Isa. 6: 5), even the King in all His unspeakable glory, and each one must see Him for himself, some time; some with that "joy unspeakable and full of glory" which thrilled my own unworthy heart, while others, also, only to cry out for the rocks and mountains to fall

on them, and hide them. "And they said to the mountains and to the rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne" (Rev. 6:16).

As for ourselves, we had "come to Mount Zion, and to the city of the ever-living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to countless hosts of angels, to the great festal gathering and Church of the first-born, whose names are recorded in Heaven, and to a Judge who is God of all, and to the spirits of righteous men made perfect, and to Jesus the Negotiator of a new Covenant, and to the sprinkled blood which speaks in more gracious terms than that of Abel.

"Therefore, receiving, as we now do, a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us cherish thankfulness so that we may ever offer to God an acceptable service, with godly reverence and awe" (Heb. 12:22-24, 28. Weymouth's Translation).

X

"THIS SAME JESUS" RETURNING TO REIGN

"For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry."—HEBREWS 10:37.

"In the Spirit he carried me to the top of a vast, lofty mountain, and showed me the Holy City, Jerusalem, coming down out of Heaven from God. It shone with a radiance like that of a very precious stone—such as a jasper, bright and transparent."—REVELATION 21:10, 11 (Weymouth's Translation).

MANY blasts of angel trumpets had we already heard. But now the archangel Gabriel, under God's orders, sounded one mighty and tremendous blast supreme! It pierced space in all directions, and sent a thrill through all our hearts. Vibration followed vibration, and echo chased echo, for some time after the great blast itself had ceased. Some event of unusual importance was, evidently, about to take place. We did not have to wait long to learn the significance of the tremendous blast.

From all directions angelic beings began to gather around the Throne of God. The very air was full of them. Gabriel then gave two

more such trumpet blasts as we had just heard, and the saints from earth, scattered out among the spheres (as groups had dropped out of our bridal party to remain on one planet after another) began to assemble. Nothing like this had ever been seen before by mortal eyes in the days of earth's greatest gatherings. Immediately it reminded me of John's vision: "I looked, and a vast host appeared which it was impossible for anyone to count, gathered from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in long white robes, and carrying palm branches in their hands. In loud voices they were exclaiming, 'It is to our God who is seated on the throne, and to the Lamb, that we owe our salvation.' All the angels were standing in a circle round the throne and round the Elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces in front of the throne and worshipped God. 'Even so,' they cried: 'The blessing and the glory, and the wisdom and the thanks and the honour and the power and the might are to be ascribed to our God, until the Ages of the Ages! Even so'" (Rev. 7: 9-12. Weymouth's Translation).

Evidently an event of most unusual importance was about to transpire, and we were to take some part in it! As coming events cast

their shadows before them, so we could now "sense" the approach of the unusual.

Plans were being explained; angel officers were taking orders; great saints were very near the throne; Jesus Himself stood nearby; the Holy Spirit was engrossed, and a momentous event was at hand!

Then followed a mighty rallying, as an army mobilizing. The order was perfect. Plans were being carried out with utmost ease and perfect precision. As one extreme follows another, quiet now reigned. From this immense angelic host and throng of saints there came not one word of gossip! Every word spoken was an order, or else an expression of readiness to obey orders. We of the earth had now been to the throne; we had seen God and lived! We had been face to face with the King! We had been glorified! So we now understood every command given (I Cor. 13:12).

The great event began to dawn on us. There was a tremendous opposition on earth to the return of Jesus accompanied by His saints, and the establishment of His reign in the earth. Satan had mobilized a mighty host of his most dastardly demons, and his cohorts of hell, and they were coming to make war on the Lamb and His Bride! Yet no heart feared. All was calmness, quietness, confidence.

Then there broke upon our astonished ears the most heart-thrilling, soul-stirring pleadings to which our mortal ears had ever listened. Could it be true? Did we not misunderstand? We all gave the closer heed, and looks of supreme surprise met as one saint faced another. O wonderful! How could it be? They who had so long desired to have some part in the plan of saving the souls of sinful men "which things the angels desire to look into" (I Pet. 1:12), were now pleading with God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, to let them meet the enemy alone, and win the battle in defense of the redeemed souls of men, as their part in overcoming the enemies of the saints! There were also the great saints of earth, among them the princely Saint Paul in the lead, insisting that since it was over ourselves the devil and his hosts would come to fight, the saints should bear the brunt of the battle, if not, indeed, fight without the aid of the angels. But glorious old Gabriel, supported by the mighty Michael, and many another archangel, had his way! The saints were guests in glory! The hosts of Heaven would settle the issue with Satan and his host!

Then came one mighty shout from the united voices of archangels, and without awaiting the arrival of the enraged devil and his army of

demons at the throne, they dashed away to war. Michael was put in charge of the angelic hosts to set the battle in array. But let the inspired John tell it so much better than I can describe it:

"And war broke out in Heaven, Michael and his angels engaging in battle with the Dragon. The Dragon fought and so did his angels; but they were defeated, and there was no longer any room found for them in Heaven. The great dragon, the ancient serpent, he who is called 'the Devil' and 'the Adversary,' and leads the whole earth astray, was hurled down to the earth, and his angels were hurled down with him. Then I heard a voice speaking in Heaven. It said, The salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God have now come, and the sovereignty of his Christ; for the accuser of our brethren has been hurled down—he who, day after day and night after night, was wont to accuse them in the presence of God. But they have gained the victory over him because of the blood of the Lamb and the testimony which they have borne, and because they held their lives cheap and did not shrink even from death. For this reason be glad, O Heaven, and you who live in Heaven! Alas for the earth and the sea! For the devil has come down to you full of fierce anger, because

he knows that his appointed time is short" (Rev. 12:7-12. Weymouth's Translation).

Then it seemed to me that ten thousand times ten thousand trumpets, bugles, cornets and clarinets, supported by a choir of transcending glory, sounded in notes of triumphant jubilee as the victorious army of angel conquerors came back to the throne! In the language of him whom God has honoured with a wider, deeper, clearer vision of the future than any other mortal has ever enjoyed: "There followed loud voices in Heaven which said, 'The sovereignty of the world now belongs to our Lord and his Christ; and he will be King until the Ages of the Ages!' Then the twenty-four Elders, who sit on thrones in the presence of God, fell on their faces and worshipped God, saying, 'We give thee thanks, O Lord God, the ruler of all, and who art and wast, because thou hast exerted thy power, thy great power, and hast become King. The nations grew angry, and thine anger has come, and the time for the dead to be judged, and the time for thee to give their reward to thy servants the prophets, and to thy people and to those who fear thee, the small and the great, and to destroy those who destroy the earth!' Then the doors of God's Sanctuary in Heaven were opened, and the Ark in which his Cove-

nant was, was seen in his Sanctuary; and there came flashes of lightning, and voices and peals of thunder, and an earthquake and hail" (Rev. 11:15-19. Weymouth's Translation).

Now followed a wonderfully impressive scene, bringing surprise to very many, joy to all, and very great joy to a host. The judgment of Stewardship was to take place. Each of us was to report his or her own work—labour in the Lord—while yet on the earth, and then be assigned proper place in the coming Kingdom of Christ. Each would now account for his or her talent, or talents (Luke 19:12-26). Since "the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to the Son" (John 5:22), Jesus sat upon the throne, and we were glad! Glad that our Big Brother was to be our Judge! Glad we had loved Him; followed Him; served Him; studied His Word, and tried while on earth to please Him. We knew His judgment would be just (John 5:30), and in full accord with the facts in each case (Rom. 2:2). My own mind ran back to a verse learned in the earth days: "For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God" (I Pet. 4:17).

Certainly there were surprises over the

Judgment findings and assignments of places, yet I saw no expression of sorrow, while regret marked many countenances. The goodness of Jesus, and His unmistakable fairness impressed everyone, so that each took his or her assignment in the coming Kingdom as of necessity, and without the slightest challenge. Each had won his own place—each was responsible for his own assignment. Some were heard to say, "If only we had it to go over again, we certainly would work harder in the Master's vineyard"—but, alas, impossible!

All had built upon the very same Foundation, Christ Jesus, as the only sound and sufficient basis of salvation (I Cor. 3:11). But there were two classes of building materials—the combustible, and the non-combustible, and these materials were now to be tested by the fire of judgment. One class of building material was composed of "wood, hay, and stubble,"—easily combustible; the other class of "gold, silver and precious stones" that would stand the fire-test of the Judgment. Those whose works were burned, I saw assigned the lowest places in the Kingdom. Many of these I recognized as earth's best housed, best clothed, best fed and blessed (?) with the biggest bank accounts. Their aspirations had been to shine as

leading "stars" on earth, and so they had, but they were assigned no shining part now!

On the other hand I saw those who had been "rich in the world's goods" and also in service to God and man, now given exalted places. Many of the poor, and still others of the middle classes, were able to withstand the fiery tests, and as they received their assignments showed beyond doubt that it is *character* God considers, and *character* that decides service, and service decides one's reward in the Judgment Day. It became perfectly clear to me now that simple faith in Jesus had brought to each follower of Christ, the salvation of his soul from hell, but only service could secure for one a crown in glory. In other words, I saw that faith brings to us salvation, while service brings to us coronation; that one cannot do enough work for God to buy salvation, nor can one put enough faith in God to win a crown. And I now saw that whatever Bible study we had done; whatever good deeds we had done—all would count in the great Day of Judgment.

From the councils about the throne we now came to understand that God's patience had been exhausted (Gen. 6:3; Isa. 63:10; Jer. 11:7, 8, 11; I Thes. 5:19) by the persistent sins of godless men left on earth, and now

passing through the Tribulation. That on the other hand some men on the earth were beginning to realize that apart from God they could do nothing (John 15:5) towards saving themselves from the utter wreckage of the remaining civilization of earth and the ruin of the race. These were tiring of Satan's tyranny. At last the nations were about to give up. Man without God had failed. As man now cried out in his helplessness, God would go down and "cut the work short in righteousness" (Romans 9:28). This meant that God would take to earth again His only begotten Son, all the angels of glory, and the saints redeemed in the blood of the Lamb; and after binding Satan for a thousand years, and destroying multitudes with the brightness of his coming (II Thes. 2:8; Heb. 10:27; Heb. 10:31; Heb. 12:29). inaugurate the millennial reign of His Son Christ Jesus.

My own heart leaped for joy! Could it be really true? Was "the parenthesis of sin" about to end? Would suffering humanity, so long handicapped, now at last soon be able to live in peace on the earth and develop it without the drawbacks of sin and Satan?

If my heart was swelling with glad thanksgiving over this prospect, so was there great joy throughout Heaven among saints and angels,

and all the heavenly host, and all faces showed it!

Back to the earth we were to go! Saints and bright shining angels, God the Father and His holy attendants—indeed, all Heaven should pour out into the sin-wrecked earth for its rescue and renovation (Rev. 21:5). And this time every eye should see the King, Christ Jesus, as He came from glory not to be born of a woman; not to be born in a manger; not to live in poverty; not to say again, "The foxes have holes, the birds of the air have their nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head" (Matt. 8:20); not to be betrayed and denied; not to be despised and spit upon; not to wear a crown of thorns on His head, and hold in His hand a reed-scepter of mock power; not to be nailed to the cross in cruel crucifixion—no, thank God, none of these. But He was now to come to reign in glory, seated upon the throne of His earthly forefather David. He would rule "with a rod of iron" some, even as John had seen and predicted: "And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the wine press of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God" (Rev. 19:15). He would put every enemy, even horrible, awful

death itself, under his feet! Every knee should bow to him, and every tongue should "confess him to be King of kings and Lord of lords" (Rom. 14:11, 15:9). He who blessed every one whom He had touched while on the earth in His first ministry—giving sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, health to the sick, strength to weak, a leap to the lame, and life, even, to the dead—"this same Jesus" seen by His disciples to go into Heaven, should now be seen to "come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven" (Acts 1:10, 11). He was to come and all the saints with Him (Zech. 14:5). Jude says, with "ten thousand of his saints," by which he doubtless means that great number no man could enumerate (Jude 14:15). Jesus should come again, and with Him all "his mighty angels" (II Thes. 1:7). Jesus Himself had said, when on the earth, "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory" (Matt. 25:31). "And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory" (Matt. 24:30).

Long had I, on earth, tried to understand

these passages over which the commentators and theologians debated, and about which they differed so widely, yet they baffled me. I found it hard to spiritualize them. Death could not be meant, for it could not come "in glory." Death has always been man's worst and last enemy. Nor could death come down in the clouds. But now these passages were perfectly clear to me. And the seeing was most satisfying. They meant just what they said. As His first coming was literal, and actually in the flesh, so should His second coming be literal, and now in the GLORIFIED flesh, but actually in the flesh! And we, too, should descend with Him, and be with Him, in the unfolding glories of the "times of refreshing" which "shall come from the presence of the Lord; and he shall send Jesus Christ, who before was preached unto you: whom the heavens must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began." "Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel, and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days" (Acts 3: 19-21, 24).

As it now impresses me, the flight from glory to the earth in chariots of clouds, was just one mighty triumphant anthem of joy and rejoicing.

And when the feet of the Blessed Christ lightly touched again the crest of Mount Olivet, the whole world stood aghast with bated breath, for the glorious phenomenon was witnessed around the entire earth, since we, for several days, were in the air hovering over the Holy City before descending; and by night the glory glow of His presence lighted the city and surrounding country for many miles. Naturally enough Associated Press dispatches told the whole world of the strange scenes transpiring; and just as naturally air ships, now traversing space between New York and London within twelve hours' time, brought people from all parts of the world with flights which broke all previous records! Of these, thousands were hungry to see Him as the ONLY HOPE for the earth, as the welcome Deliverer. Other thousands were simply sightseers, coming solely to satisfy idle curiosity. Then there was that ubiquitous class, ever on the alert for the new, the strange, the unusual news, namely, the Press reporters, who were there to "feature" the phenomenon in thrilling "stories" for their respective great metropolitan dailies.

During the time we were in the air with our Lord, the whole earth took its turn by night in seeing the "sights," so that literally "every eye" saw Him, as the distinct outline of His

glorious figure could again be seen forming the center of the glow. "Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him; and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him" (Rev. 1:7). Long, long ago John had been shown in a vision that which was now actually happening. "And they also which pierced him" referred undoubtedly to the Jews who crucified Christ. So, now this peculiar people, seemingly "the apple" of God's eye, kept together nationally, in a sense, through all the many vicissitudes of many centuries, were beholding Him from all parts of the world, and were wailing "because of him." They wailed because they now knew it was their long-looked-for Messiah! whom they had crucified, and their sins against Him now loomed up before them larger, and still larger till their bitter lamentations were heart-rending.

They were the more fully convinced of His identity, since when the feet of Jesus touched the Mount of Olives it cleft asunder, parting North and South, and thus forming a valley running East and West—just as their own Zechariah had said should be the case (Zech. 14:4). This remarkable phenomenon had been radiographed at once over the entire earth. And literally hundreds of kodaks and cameras

had been turned on this new valley, the pictures from which exposures were quickly sent by the latest process of wireless photographic reproduction to the metropolitan dailies throughout the world.

But as if this proof were insufficient, the world was also now being informed that all of a sudden an immense stream of water had begun to gush out from under the site of the Temple when Jesus set foot on the Mount of Olives, and pictures of this stream, dividing in two parts, one flowing towards the Dead Sea, the other towards the Mediterranean, were being reproduced in the world's greatest dailies! The Jews took out their long neglected Bibles and refreshed their memories as to such a strange change in the topography of Palestine, and sure enough there it was: "And it shall be in that day, that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem; half of them towards the former sea, and half of them towards the hinder sea: in summer and winter shall it be" (Zech. 14: 8). Enough! THIS COULD BE NONE OTHER THAN THAT VERY MESSIAH WHOM THE LORD HAD LONG AGO PLEDGED TO HIS CHOSEN PEOPLE. Now men of the Wells class, speaking lightly of the Jewish history, and discounting Biblical accounts of divine favouritism for Israel, would be scoffed instead of their scoffing!

But the devil had been cast out of Heaven—whipped! Worn into a frazzle! Naturally he was angered to the very limit of endurance. He knew, too, that his time was short. So the appearance of Jesus Christ and His saints on the earth was the signal for the satanic hosts, demons and devilish men, to assemble in one mighty final conflict. As God showed this to John, and that in a vision beyond all compare with any others, let him tell it: "I saw three foul spirits, resembling frogs, issue from the mouth of the Dragon, from the mouth of the Wild Beast, and from the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of demons working marvels—spirits that go out to control the kings of the whole earth, to assemble them for the battle which is to take place on the great day of God, the Ruler of all. (I am coming like a thief. Blessed is the man who keeps awake and guards his raiment for fear he walk about ill-clad, and his uncomeliness become manifest.) And assemble them they did at the place called in Hebrew 'Har-Magedon.' Then the seventh angel poured his bowl into the air, and a loud voice came out of the Sanctuary from the throne, saying, 'Everything is now ready.' Flashes of lightning followed, and voices, and peals of thunder and an earthquake

more dreadful than there had ever been since there was a man upon the earth—so terrible was it, and so great. * * * Every island fled away, and there was not a mountain anywhere to be seen. And heavy hail, that seemed to be a talent in weight, fell from the sky upon the people; and they spoke evil of God on account of the plague of the hail—because the plague of it was exceedingly severe" (Rev. 16:13-21. Weymouth's Translation).

But, thank God, John saw much more which we were now witnessing. If the mere promise of God that Satan should be bound, thrilled John's soul, how much greater was our thrill, now that we beheld the fulfillment of those pledges of Jehovah God to men? John wrote: "And I saw an angel come down from Heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit, and upon his arm he carried a great chain. He laid hold of the dragon—the ancient serpent—who is the devil and the adversary, and bound him for a thousand years, and hurled him into the bottomless pit. He closed the entrance and put a seal upon him, in order that he might be unable to lead the nations astray any more until the thousand years were at an end. Afterwards he is to be set at liberty a short time. And I saw thrones, and those who were seated on

them, to whom judgment was entrusted" (Rev. 20: 1-4. Weymouth's Translation).

As the assembly of angels and saints in Heaven, just now recited, was a record-breaker, so was the next congregation. The Lord Jesus Christ was to be crowned King of kings and Lord of lords, and the Jews were to accept Him as their long looked-for Messiah, King and Redeemer! They were now in Jerusalem from all parts of the world. All the country round about the city for many miles was one solid camp wherever camping was permitted. The air was equally full of angels and saints. The glory glow was seen by night, and a wonderful cloud by day. The ceremonies were to be short and simple. Only one-half an hour would God and His mighty hosts of Heaven be away from the throne (Rev. 8: 1). (The "half of an hour" expressing a short time, rather than thirty minutes, of course.)

The earth was now treated to such music by the heavenly hosts as its people never before dreamed possible! The angels sang, and all the world heard it, for the Jews had installed the most wonderful radio station of all the earth in Jerusalem, the contribution of rich and Palestine-loving Jews of all lands.

Then there came a voice like the tremendous thunders of many waters breaking loose:

"THIS IS MY BELOVED SON: RECEIVE YE HIM, THIS TIME AS YOUR KING?" It was a question. The saints returned from glory, not only, but also all those who had passed through the tribulation, united their voices in reply, the Jews joining in, proclaiming in the most perfect unison: "Even so; come Lord Jesus, for Thou art Lord of lords, and King of kings, now unto our subdued and conquered souls."

One more mighty, grand, resplendent angel anthem rang out, rending air, earth and sky. Then the great apostle Paul was called upon to pronounce the benediction in which he said: "Jesus, thou art the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords; who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see; to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen" (I Tim. 6:15, 16). "To God only wise, be glory, through Jesus Christ, for ever. Amen" (Rom. 16:27). "My love be with you all in Christ Jesus. Amen" (I Cor. 16:24). "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, be with you all. Amen" (II Cor. 13:14). "Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen" (Gal. 6:18). "Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sin-

cerity. Amen" (Eph. 6:24). And "now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ: to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen, and Amen" (Heb. 13:20, 21).

The clouds lifted, the heavenly company went upward with it, on and up, till no mortal eye could see it longer, and the Prince of Peace alone remained of the heavnly host to lead men on into glorious VICTORY!

XI

A THOUSAND YEARS OF PEACE

"When the Lord shall build up Zion, he shall appear in his glory."—PSALMS 102:16.

"They lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years."—REVELATION 20:4.

"They shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years."—REVELATION 20:6.

AT last! "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth PEACE, good will toward men!" For He who had said, "I will give PEACE in the land, and ye shall lie down, and none shall make you afraid: and I will rid evil beasts out of the land, neither shall the sword go through your land" (Lev. 26:6), had at last sent again into the world "His only begotten Son,"—"THE PRINCE OF PEACE" (Isa. 9:6). Long had the world said, "Peace, peace, when there is no peace" (Jer. 6:14), trying to heal the wound of sin thus lightly, yet in vain. Truly, "the way of peace they have not known" (Rom. 3:17). For as God had said, "They have seduced my people, saying, 'Peace,' and there was no peace" (Ezek. 13:10). The world had been exceedingly slow to learn that "in ME ye might have PEACE" (John 16:33), and in HIM alone. Truly the great business man of

America was right: "It is Christ, or it is CHAOS." And chaos seems to reign all over the world in its incipient form, yet we are struggling to FORCE peace. "PEACE from God our Father," is Saint Paul's benediction (Rom. 1:7). Again he tells us the kingdom of God is PEACE (Rom. 14:17). Jesus Christ is the "King of Peace" (Heb. 7:2). "He is our PEACE" (Eph. 2:14). And now He has come! He has battled with the source of all our confusion—Satan—conquered him, and consigned him to "the bottomless pit" (Rev. 20:3) as his temporary abode—for one thousand years—thank the Lord!

In the beginning of that thousand years little babies shall be born to enter a long life of PEACE, joy and happiness unalloyed. Methuselah lived to be 969, according to the record, but doubtless men shall live from the beginning to the end of the millennium! For "the righteous shall flourish like the palm tree" (Psa. 92:12). And Isaiah pictured this period of peace and prosperity most vividly, as follows: "Behold, I create new heavens, and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. But be ye glad and rejoice forever in that which I create: for behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy. And I will rejoice in Jeru-

salem, and joy in my people: and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying. There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days: for the child shall die an hundred years old; but the sinner, being an hundred years old shall be accursed. And they shall build houses, and inhabit them, and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them. They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat: for as the days of a tree are the days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands. They shall not labour in vain, nor bring forth for trouble: for they are the seed of the blessed of the Lord, and their offspring with them. And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer: and while they are yet speaking, I will hear. The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock: and dust shall be the serpent's meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the Lord" (Isa. 65: 17-25).

The word of God is always consistent. It never clashes with itself. Its order is not always clearly chronological. It is rather a patch of flowers, growing in the yard promiscuously —you must gather the flowers and arrange them according to colours. So, the great truths

taught by Isaiah are in line with those of John's vision, banished on the Isle of Patmos. Let John tell what he saw, and then shall follow the details of that which God gave the author the privilege of seeing.

John says, "And I saw thrones, and some who were seated on them, to whom judgment was entrusted. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded on account of the testimony that they had borne to Jesus and on account of God's Message, and also the souls of those who had not worshipped the Wild Beast or his statue, nor received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands; and they came to life and were kings with Christ for a thousand years. No one else who was dead rose to life until the thousand years were at an end. This is the First Resurrection. Blessed and holy are those who share in the First Resurrection. The Second Death has no power over them, but they shall be priests to God and to Christ for the thousand years.

"But when the thousand years are at an end, the Adversary will be released from his imprisonment, and will go out to lead astray the nations in all the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, and assemble them for war, and they are like the sands on the seashore in number. And they went up over the whole breadth

of the earth, and surrounded the encampment of God's people and the beloved city. But fire came down from Heaven and consumed them; and the devil, who had been leading them astray, was thrown into the lake of fire and sulphur where the Wild Beast and the False Prophet were, and day and night they will suffer torture until the Ages of the Ages.

"Then I saw a great white throne and One who was seated on it, from whose presence earth and sky fled away, and no place was found for them. And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing in front of the throne. And books were opened; and so was another book—namely, the Book of Life; and the dead were judged by the things recorded in the books in accordance with what their conduct had been. Then the sea yielded up the dead who were in it, Death and Hades yielded up the dead who were in them, and each man was judged in accordance with what his conduct had been. Then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire; this is the Second Death—the lake of fire. And if any one's name was not found recorded in the Book of Life he was thrown into the lake of fire" (Rev. 20: 4-15. Weymouth's Translation).

But before taking up the things future, let us look backward for a moment:

"The parenthesis of sin" is now past! The creature made in the image of his Creator, yet side-tracked by Satan from the divine plan for him, is now once more on the track. Once more he is in harmony with his God. Once more he will dwell in Eden, as both Isaiah and John saw and stated, for all lost in Genesis is restored to man in Revelation.

This second attempt to live a godly life will be free from temptation. There will be no inducement to do wrong. In the human heart love to God will reign. "Thy will be done on earth as it is done in Heaven," will be prayed no more, for it has been answered! God's will, the one will of all the earth, is now supreme! Flesh, bones, blood—"the natural man," with a stubborn will ceases to rule. No longer can man say with Paul, "For that which I do, I allow not: for what I would, that I do not; but what I hate, that I do. For the good that I would, I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do. * * * When I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?

I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin" (Rom. 7:15, 19, 21-25).

So, at last the spiritual man is victorious! Paul saw clearly humanity groaning in the bondage of the flesh-life, then the wonderful victory following in the spiritual life of this period we are considering. He says: "For all creation, gazing eagerly as if with outstretched neck, is waiting and longing to see the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creation fell into subjection to failure and unreality (not of its own choice, but by the will of Him who so subjected it). Yet there was always the hope that at last the creation itself would also be set free from the thraldom of decay so as to enjoy the liberty that will attend the glory of the children of God. For we know that the whole of creation is groaning together in the pains of childbirth until this hour. And more than that, we ourselves, though we possess the Spirit as a foretaste and pledge of the glorious future, yet we ourselves inwardly sigh, as we wait and long for open recognition as sons through the deliverance of our bodies" (Rom. 8:20-23. Weymouth's Translation).

At last a part of the human race has overcome self and Satan through Jesus Christ our

Lord, and these are entering upon that blessed heritage pledged by the Master when He showed John some of the glories mortals should enjoy during the thousand years of peace. "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me on my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne" (Rev. 3:21).

This passage, along with others, certainly does teach that there are two thrones, the Father's and the Son's. If two thrones, there must be two kingdoms. But are there? If so the Word must set them forth somewhere within its lids. As a matter of fact Bible students have long wondered over two expressions used frequently in the Book of books. These are kingdom passages. They are "the kingdom of God," and "the kingdom of heaven," or "the kingdom of the heavens." Great scholars are arrayed on both sides. Two of the best Bible interpreters of our day who were asked what was the difference in meaning of the two expressions, agreed that "the kingdom of God" is a spiritual kingdom, within the Christian's heart, or inner life—spiritual life, salvation. Jesus Himself said, "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: neither shall they say "Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you" (Luke 17:20,

21). Paul said, "The kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit" (Rom. 14:17). These, and other passages seem to settle it that "the kingdom of God" is a spiritual kingdom, within our hearts.

On the other hand "the kingdom of the heavens" seems to be a kingdom of the air, or of the elements, or of material things. His kingdom was not worldly, carnal, fleshly—"not of this world" (John 18:36), but like a ship, as some one has said—while not of the water yet in it; so His kingdom, while not of the world, yet is in it. The mother of James and John certainly understood (and surely only from His own teaching) that He would be given His own kingdom in due time, hence asked that her boys might be granted the honour of sitting, the one on His right hand, the other on His left; and Jesus did not correct her impression of His having a kingdom, whereas had she been in error He certainly would have corrected her (Matthew 20:23). Paul fully believed in a kingdom in some sense specially belonging to the Son, for he speaks of "the kingdom of his dear Son" (Col. 1:13). Peter also held to the same belief, for he refers to the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" (II Peter 1:11). John

reports Jesus as admitting himself to be a king: "Yes; * * * you say truly that I am a king. For this purpose was I born, and for this purpose I am come into the world—to give testimony to the truth" (John 18:37; Weymouth's Translation). Even Zechariah had prophesied long before Jesus came, that "the Lord shall be King over all the earth" (Zech. 14:9). In his wonderful and glorious vision of the reign of Christ, John heard great voices in heaven saying, "The sovereignty of the world now belongs to our Lord and his Christ; and he will be King until the Ages of the Ages" (Rev. 11:15; Weymouth's Translation). Away back in the dim past God had graciously entrusted to His faithful servant Daniel a full vision of these things of the Kingdom of Jesus: "I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed. * * * I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them; until the Ancient of days came,

and judgment was given to the saints of the Most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom. * * * And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him" (Dan. 7:13, 14, 21, 22, 27.)

Concerning this kingdom of heaven Jesus assured His disciples two things: first, that His followers should have an interest in, and take part in, the management of His kingdom; and second, that it, unlike the kingdom of God, which is not meat and drink, should be a kingdom in which there should be eating and drinking. Here are His own words: "I covenant to give you, as my father has covenanted to give me, a kingdom—so that you shall eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones as judges over the twelve tribes of Israel" (Luke 22:29, 30; Weymouth's Translation).

Even after Jesus had gone back to glory, and was showing John things which should take place, he let him hear the "living creatures" and the twenty-four Elders around the throne singing a new song, and it was about Jesus and His followers reigning: "It is fitting that thou shouldst be the one to take the book and break

the seal; because thou hast been offered in sacrifice, and hast purchased for God with thine own blood some out of every tribe and language and people and nation, and hast formed them into a kingdom to be priests to our God; and they reign over the earth" (Rev. 5:9; Weymouth's Translation).

Then as I wept and prayed in great agony over these startling statements of prophecy, and cried out to God for light and understanding, that which He granted me to see was the glorious triumph of Christ and Christianity for a thousand years to come, and at the close of that period the delivery of the kingdom by the Son to the Father (I Cor. 15:24-28). And the very distinct impression made upon my mind was that the thousand years would be a sample of what would have happened on earth from Eden forward had man refused to eat of the forbidden fruit, and thereafter been allowed to partake of the "tree of life" (Gen. 3:22, 23); and had proceeded with his own development, and that of the earth's civilization, without the horrible handicap of sin.

Among the items of glorious life-unfolding and marvelous world progress, I recall and record the following:

A climate salubrious and thoroughly comfortable, without the inconvenience and expense

of racing across, or up and down, the land, looking for it. With extremes of heat and cold went the corrosive havoc wrought by the weather. Thus "colds," pneumonia, catarrh, and all kindred diseases vanished. All noxious growths, constituting a part of the curse for sin (Gen. 3:18), disappeared. Gradually old gullies and grinning gulches filled with debris and growing vines, shrubs and beautiful flowers. New varieties of grains, fruits and vegetables were growing in increasing abundance. So luxuriously grew the things that man needed, minus now crab-grass, weeds, thistles, thorns and briars, that light and little effort was necessary to have plenty of the very best foods for man and beast. Man ceased to care for meats, hence no longer took the lives of the animals, birds, fishes, etc. Thus all life below man lost its fear of him, so that I could see little children now playing with erstwhile vicious and poisonous creatures, once feared, dreaded and destroyed.

As sickness gave way before the physicians and scientists, and scientific food was generally used, while insects, pests, germs, microbes, malaria, etc., were destroyed, doctors became less and less necessary, druggists went out of business, and hospitals, undertakers and gravediggers found themselves less and less popular

day by day, until finally they disappeared altogether towards the end of the thousand years. So the whole drift of human life was towards that perfection which had been the dream of man for centuries, now to be fully reached in the "Ages upon Ages" period to follow immediately upon the thousand years of peace.

Being a great lover of the Book of Isaiah, my mind very naturally reverted to the glorious vision God had given the old Prophet whose lips were touched with a live coal of fire, and who wrote with a pen of fiery fervour: "Rejoice ye with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all ye that love her: rejoice for joy with her, all ye that mourn for her. * * * For thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will extend peace to her like a river, and the glory of the Gentiles like a flowing stream. * * * As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you; and ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem. * * * And when ye see this, your heart shall rejoice. * * * For, behold, the Lord will come with fire, and with his chariots like a whirlwind, to render his anger with fury and his rebuke with flames of fire. For by fire and by his sword will the Lord plead with all flesh: and the slain of the Lord shall be many. * * * It shall come, that I will gather all nations and tongues; and they shall come and see my glory. * * *

And they shall declare my glory among the Gentiles" (Isa. 66:10, 12, 13, 15, 16, 18, 19).

There had always been, since I could remember, a tendency to spiritualize most of the prophetic promises of blessings to God's people. But that system of interpretation never did satisfy. Somehow a physical man yearned for a physical home, on a physical earth, with physical blessings, *minus* all curses. All glory to God! now, I was seeing it realized. God was bringing it about. It was His plan to do away completely with all the ravages and ruin of sin; He who pledged Himself to make a sevenfold disposal of sin unto its complete obliteration, even to the point of His forgetting our sins! would bring it all about. His sevenfold promises: 1. To forgive our sins: "Then will I forgive their sin" (II Chron. 7:14); 2. To blot them out: "I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, * * * thy sins" (Isa. 44:22); 3. Cover them up: "Thou hast forgiven the iniquity of thy people; thou hast covered their sins" (Psa. 85:2); 4. Casts them behind His back: "Thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back" (Isa. 38:17); 5. As far as the East is from the West: "As far as the East is from the West, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us" (Psa. 103:12);

6. Casts them to the bottom of the sea: "Thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea" (Micah 7:19); 7. Remember them no more forever: "Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more" (Heb. 10:17).

Sin was to be entirely out of God's great, divine mind—He would forget it! Therefore, no longer should sin warp man's conduct; no longer should sin be in man's heart; no longer would sin be in man's words; no longer should sin throttle man's steps; no longer should sin cloud man's way; no longer should sin weaken man with disease; no longer would sin bring man shame and failure; and no longer should sin hinder man's progress. "The parenthesis of sin" now passed utterly and eternally!

With sin a thing of the past, and Satan bound for a thousand years, there would be no diseases and few deaths; no hate; no bitterness; no unforgiving spirit; no rankled mind as injustice is recalled; no ugly rivalry; no thefts; no lying; no defrauding; no greed; no graft; no false stimulants; no coffee, tea, liquor nor tobacco (what on earth will some people do in such a world!); no lust; no "white slave traffic;" no morphine victims; no "dope" fiends; no ill-formed children; no pain in child-bearing; no uncontrolled children; no unduly indulgent parents; no straying sons or delin-

quent daughters; no courts—save for records; no jails; no penitentiaries; no "hell on earth" in any home, nor any "hell's half acre."

But Churches? Yes; schools? yes; society? yes; worship? yes; books? yes; papers and other periodicals? yes; carpenters and contractors? yes; sky-scrapers? yes; parks? yes; highways? EVERYWHERE! farmers? yes; merchants? yes; factories? yes; capital and labour? yes, but PARTNERS, profit-sharing now; pastimes? yes, but altogether innocent and helpful; music? yes, the best, without a discord; eating? yes, but scientific foods, and sensible consumption thereof; drinking? yes, but only healthful, harmless sorts; pleasures? yes, indeed—more than ever, and full of joy, gladness and heavenly ecstasy!

All life is to be active; everyone will be well, without "hook-worms," pelagia, laziness or even biliousness—to make sluggish, so that all will be full of energy, "pep," power and efficiency. All hands will be busy, taking part in the new and wonderful development of the earth under this strange and startling regime. The introduction of the most adaptable elements of the wonderful civilizations of the unfallen spheres, will be led by the brilliant saints of long ago—perhaps centuries ago—who have

so long been studying those bright, shining, sinless worlds, visible any cloudless night.

A thousand new discoveries, a host of new inventions, and many great national and international conclaves, will constitute some of the interesting features of the marvelous developments in those glorious days to dawn. And many things will go, such as our railroads—far too slow and too clumsy for such an age of advancement. Electricity, and other equally strange extractions from nature's cloisters, will take the place of steam. The airplane will be perfected, and in general use. But that will become clumsy, too! Saints who have traversed the air without intermediatory agencies will conquer the air, overcome gravity, and in their eventually fully glorified bodies, bid defiance to space! The sixth sense will be so developed that in a most important sense we shall "know as we are known," though not in the fullest, highest sense, yet awhile. New powers, new agents, new elements, new combinations, new laws, will be discovered, and the whole world will be "on a boom"! The dear old earth has just begun to grow out of its babyhood!

As there will be demand for more land to accommodate the returned dear ones from glory, and also for those being born (while there will

be only an occasional death), God's promise of the most remarkable and seemingly impossible topographical changes, will then take place. The mountains will crumble at God's command (Job 9:5, Isa. 54:10), while the sea will obey Him in its mighty upheaval, furnishing the most fertile soil imaginable (Rev. 21:1, Isa. 50:2). With a uniform climate, and such alluvial soil resulting from the corrosion of ages, and the deposits of sea life at death for centuries, no wonder the trees shall bear monthly, or their immense and spungy leaves be "for the healing of the nations"—consuming as they will the poisonous gases that may be left in the air.

The Jews have gathered back in Jerusalem, their rightful home, preserved for them during the vicissitudes of centuries. The Palestine Republic has been formed. The old city has been repaired, walls and all, and around the old, the new, the modern in all respects, will be built. The "holy city" will become in a sense the capital of the world, and the mecca of all nations and peoples. The Jew will take his original place as a leader among men. The wild olive branch (Gentiles) will be cut off, and the natural branches (the Jews) will be grafted into their own root-system (Rom. 11:17-36; Luke 21:24). The whole world will recognize

the Jews as a remarkable people, chosen of God, and kept of God, and now to be wonderfully used of God. The race hissed, mocked, derided, persecuted, spit upon and despised, will then come to its own place of leadership and honour and power.

The Jew has never really lost his leadership entirely. He has always occupied a commanding place, though scattered here and yonder among the Gentiles; though hated, though persecuted, though maltreated, yet always managing in one way or another to command attention! In some way he has always made himself felt as an important factor even among his captors—as Daniel in Babylon; as among ruling Romans a money-lender; as shifty multipliers among jealous Russians; as Disraeli the Prime Minister among his friendly rivals in England; as the Rothschild money monopolizers of nations; as the Kuhn-Loeb and Company syndicate financiers of America, and the many colossal clothing manufacturers of our country. The ubiquitous Jew!—like a cat—lighting on his feet whenever there is half a chance! Yes, tricky, so much so the Gentile finds it hard to keep up with him!

Always, in all places and in all times the Jew must be reckoned with. God's mark has been, and still is, upon him. And the God who

scattered him pledged His word for the return of this strange, "peculiar people" to the land of Palestine; the land God gave them to be their very own (Jer. 32:37-42; Jer. 31:10), as follows: "Behold, I will gather them out of all countries whither I have driven them in mine anger, and in my fury, and in great wrath; and I will bring them again unto this place, and I will cause them to dwell safely: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God; and I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me for ever, for the good of them and of their children after them: and I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me. Yea, I will rejoice over them to do them good, and I will plant them in this land assuredly with my whole heart, and with my whole soul. For thus saith the Lord, Like as I have brought all this great evil upon this people, so will I bring upon them all the good that I have promised them." "Hear ye the word of the Lord, O ye nations, and declare it in the isles afar off, and say, He that scattered Israel will gather him, and keep him, as a shepherd doth his flock."

It is rather humiliating to contemplate the

reversal of the relationship between Gentile and Jew in that day, for the present leader will then be led! This vision God gave to Zechariah away back in the dim past: "Thus saith the Lord of hosts, In those days it shall come to pass that ten men shall take hold, out of all languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you; for we have heard that God is with you" (Zech. 8:23).

But, if Jesus Christ, the greatest of all the Jews who ever lived, shall yet be accepted by the Jews, and He shall take them in hand, honour and bless and use them, they will undergo the first hard trial of reversing their faith and practice, and even have to surrender their homes among the nations of the earth, and re-settle in the land of Palestine. When these changes shall have been "swallowed as a bitter pill" by the Jew, and that pill has become "sweet as honey" in his stomach, then it will be easier for the Gentile to "take his medicine!"

In that hour the Spirit of God shall rule in all hearts—Jew and Gentile—and Love shall be earth's law, so that there shall be no room for envy, jealousy, competition, rivalry, for all such old things will have passed away, and God will be "making all things new."

XII

"THE NEW HEAVENS AND THE NEW EARTH"

"That the things which cannot be shaken may remain."—HEBREWS 12:27.

"Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion: for, lo, I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith the Lord."—ZECHARIAH 2:10.

"Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."—II PETER 3:13.

"The former things are passed away. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful."—REVELATION 21:4, 5.

THE thousand years of "peace on earth" have now ended. During it Jesus and His saints have reigned. He has assigned many posts of honour and first importance. Some of the grand old martyrs have been given "authority over ten cities," or wide districts of territory over which they hold supervision. Others have had given to them "authority over five cities," or still less authority, yet that which is equal to their capacity. The most perfect harmony has reigned among the nations. No more friction; no more violated compacts; no more infringing on the rights of others; no more misunderstandings;

no more complications that threaten war; no more battle-ships; no more standing armies at heavy expense to the nations. Peace and perfect tranquillity have reigned under the "PRINCE OF PEACE" who alone could bring about peace after all the most strenuous efforts of the nations had failed—utterly, ignominiously failed! The nations of the whole earth have been completely unified. At first they were ruled over with a rod of iron (Rev. 2:27, 19:15), then with Satan and his Antichrist consigned to the bottomless pit, peace and love took the place of force. After several thousand years under the rule of "the god of this world" (II Cor. 4:3, 4), and failure, ruin and wreckage the inevitable outcome, now a thousand years with Christ in control shows a most striking contrast in results, with a glorious civilization covering the entire earth!

Then I saw Jesus going back to the throne of God to report the work He had eventually accomplished through the sacrifice of His own blood on the cross for the redemption of a fallen race, and to deliver the kingdom He had bought with His blood to the Father (I Cor. 15:24-27). What an hour! It seemed to me that Heaven had never before been so crowded with the angel hosts—seraphim and cherubim in shining garment of white, whose faces glowed

with celestial glory while they united with great delegations from the unfallen worlds in an unparalleled celebration of this unique event of supreme importance. There was one round of song and praise and heavenly anthem after another, and it wound up with the climactic scene of the archangel Gabriel placing the Crown of Victory upon the once bleeding brow of the Son of God! Then all the heavenly host prostrated itself in adoration of the Son, proclaiming in the most perfect unison, "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty, the Eternal Alpha and Omega, to whom be Glory, honour and praise throughout the Ages upon Ages."

Test seems to be a universal law. It must come. Without tests there is only a passive piety and a negative virtue. All souls must undergo temptation, Christ Himself not being exempt therefrom. So Satan was loosed for "a little season," that he might go out and try all those who were born during the millennium. During this period there were millions of births and very few deaths. Not a few of the new and untried lives would follow the example of Adam and yield to the test. And these were the people who enlisted with the devil to form his army of wicked ones who surrounded the camp of the saints and the holy city (Rev. 20:9). This was the final conflict

of all the many battles on the poor blood-stained earth! God Himself came down and led His own hosts on to triumphant victory, for He fought the devil with His own fire, till all those who had associated themselves with Satan were destroyed (II Thes. 2:8; Heb. 10:27). Then he through whose machinations those unable to withstand the test had aligned themselves, was consigned to the lake of fire and brimstone to be tormented day and night forever (Rev. 20:1). This is the last of Satan! "Praise God from whom all blessings flow!"

With this final disposition of the devil, and the ending of death—man's last enemy (I Cor. 15:26) the way was now clear for the unfolding of that glorious estate for which suffering humanity had so long yearned. As John Wesley put it, "Restless, resigned, for God I wait. For God my vehement soul stands still." The prayers of saints had long been full of expectancy. Sermons centered around this soul-satisfying prospect. Hymns and songs were saturated with the theme, Heaven. Dying saints had often caught glorious glimpses of the celestial city. The Word of God had spoken much, if mystically, about the peaceful, happy life to be. The soul's deepest desire, the heart's greatest yearning, the dearest dream of ages, had been HEAVEN.

The dear old saints of earth in their shouts of "Glory"!, had given vent to a rhapsody all too spasmodic. Their foretaste of the Heaven-to-be, when all saints should at all times live in the ecstasy of constant communion with their blessed Lord, had been all too short, and almost tantalizing. One dear old saint who immortalized himself in his writing on Heaven had said, "I have an unspeakable desire to know the future, to see and enjoy it, and to be there," in which sentiment he but expressed the yearnings of all saints in all ages.

The Jewish people, as is perfectly well known, were saturated with an insatiable desire to enjoy Heaven in the flesh, on earth, a Kingdom of PEACE, PLENTY and PROSPERITY. It was the dream of the patriarchs and the enrapturing vision of the prophets of Israel. Where did they get it? Undoubtedly from their own scriptures—our Bible, too, in part.

While my own soul became intoxicated with the transcending scenes of future glory to which a most merciful Heavenly Father was introducing me, my mind turned easily, and naturally to the thrilling descriptions, with which I was so familiar through years of close and prayerful study, of the new day to dawn for erstwhile sin-cursed humanity, as given by the grand old men of God, the prophets of

Israel, who were so greatly honoured by being allowed, Moses-like, to stand on some high peak of vantage ground and thence to view the splendid spectacle of a sinless world conquered by Jesus Christ, "the Prince of Peace," and by Him delivered to the Father in Heaven above. Even Abraham "looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God" (Heb. 11:10). Poor old pitiably wishy-washy Balaam had prophesied, "I shall see him, but not now; I shall behold him, but not nigh: there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a sceptre shall rise out of Israel—Out of Jacob shall come he that shall have dominion" (Num. 24:17, 19). That outstanding human peak, the patriarch Job, said, "For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though, after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh I shall see God" (Job 19:25, 26). The Psalmist saw the "greater" Jerusalem, and said, "The Lord doth build up Jerusalem. * * * When the Lord doth build up Zion, he shall appear in his glory" (Psa. 102:16). Hosea heard the Lord saying, "I will be thy king" (Hos. 13:10). Isaiah in one of his many intoxicating rhapsodies caught the glorious vision and exclaimed, "Behold a King shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule

in judgment" (Isa. 32:1). "Thine eyes shall see the king in his beauty" (Isa. 33:17). "For the Lord is our judge; the Lord is our law-giver, the Lord is our king: he will save us" (Isa. 33:22). "Sing, O heavens, and be joyful, O earth: and break forth into singing, O mountains: for the Lord hath comforted his people, and will have mercy upon his afflicted" (Isa. 49:13). "Break forth into joy, sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem: for the Lord hath comforted his people, he hath redeemed Jerusalem. The Lord hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God" (Isa. 52:9, 10). "For thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left: thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles, and make the desolate cities to be inhabited. * * * For thy Maker is thine Husband; the Lord of Hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer the holy One of Israel; the God of the whole earth shall he be called" (Isa. 54:3, 5). "Arise and shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising" (Isa.

60:1-3). "For since the beginning of the world men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, beside thee, what he hath prepared for him that waiteth for him" (Isa. 64:4).

Then God gave to Jeremiah, whose prophecies might be called pessimistic, a glorious vision of those golden days of victory on earth: "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a king shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely; and this is the name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS" (Jer. 23:5, 6). "And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more" (Jer. 31:34). "Behold, I will gather them out of all countries whither I have driven them in mine anger, and in my fury, and in great wrath; and I will bring them again unto this place, and I will cause them to dwell safely; and they shall be my people, and I will be their God; and I will give them one heart, and one way, that they

may fear me forever, for the good of them, and for their children after them: and I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me. Yea, I will rejoice over them to do them good, and I will plant them in this land assuredly with my whole heart, and with my whole soul * * * for thus saith the Lord, Like as I have brought all this great evil upon this people so will I bring upon them all the good that I have promised them" (Jer. 32:37-42).

But time would fail us to give the visions of the many major and minor prophets. There is a wonderful similarity in the seeings and sayings of these prophets of God. They all see Christ as King; they see the Jews returned to Palestine; they see Jerusalem rebuilt; they see peace, plenty and progress; they see security from their enemies, and eventually a remarkable triumph over the other nations of the earth, by whom their people had been mocked, derided and maltreated.

After more than a quarter of a century of praying, thinking, crying, agonizing over these wonderful prophetic pictures, until saturated with their essence, is it any wonder that God should have imbued me with the gist of their

teaching, and inspired me to see, and stimulated me to tell that which has lingered in my mind and heart of the gracious and even glorious visions He saw fit to give me? The glory of the one thousand years of peace was itself soul-satisfying, but even greater glory, and in line with all the holy prophets, will now be unfolded in the vision of "the new heavens and the new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."

Following the chaos of social relations and conditions came a more awful, because a more feelable, chaos of earthly conditions. The sky became lurid; the air seemed black; tongues of fire leaped up from the horizon in different directions; lightnings flashed; mighty peals of thunder rolled through the strange-looking heavens; earthquakes shook the whole earth with queer tremblings; all nature seemed convulsed! Then it grew very dark—but only for a few seconds did it last; nor did buildings fall, crack, or in any wise suffer; nor was anyone injured. A mighty transition was taking place in the physical earth just as a tremendous change had occurred in the spiritual realm when Jesus went back to the Father's House and reported the work of redemption of the soul, redemption of the body, and the redemption of the earth itself. As fire came down on

Pentecost to end the reign of flesh in the individual; and as fire came down from heaven to consume the army of Satan arrayed against saints of God, so now fire was working its radical changes in the earth and air, "wherein the heavens, being on fire, shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat." "The day of the Lord" had come, "in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat; the earth, also, and all the works therein, shall be burned up. * * * Nevertheless, we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness" (II Pet. 3:10, 12, 13).

As previously said, the deck is now cleared! Satan is in the lake of fire, along with the Antichrist, and all the demons, imps, evil spirits and the hosts of hell; war has ended; judgment is past; the Kingdom of Christ has been delivered up to the Father; His kingdom has reigned in the hearts of men, and in the affairs of nations; the earth itself has been purified by fire, and fully restored to its Edenic glory! All lost in Eden has now been restored, and pre-sin peace and splendour, joy and glory now reign, and the presence of God on the earth has—Hallelujah!—again become an accom-

plished fact! Once more man "shall see his face" and live!

While God's Home is in Heaven—the celestial city, He is also dwelling on all His planets, being omnipresent, and at last even upon the little prodigal planet! And while the home of the redeemed saints is primarily on the earth, their heaven, they are strangely enough so much like their Big Brother in bodily qualities of fully glorified beings, that they, as the angels, can now overcome gravity and defy space! So that a visit to the throne of God is now an easy matter, and they can truly call the Father's House of "many mansions," their very own, just as any child may freely visit, and feel fully at home in, his father's house on the earth.

Heaven on earth! God tabernacling with men! Now "nothing between" the saints and their Saviour! Peace, perfect peace, the peace that passeth all understanding! The full triumph of the Cross! God's plans forever vindicated! Man's new life begun free from all handicaps! ETERNITY has dawned!

The thrills of this new life are transcendently glorious!—so intoxicating and exhilarating that I who make this record—an unemotional man—find it difficult to write for weeping with joy unspeakable and full of glory! Yet the task is not done. That which was

shown me furthermore in my dream of the future—my vision of "the Ages upon Ages," must now be detailed.

Once more the air was rent. Other huge blasts had seemed to show full capacity of trumpet soundings; but not so! Gabriel must have tried himself this time! The very earth seemed to tremble under my feet! The echo was something marvelous, and as it rang and rolled and radiated, the impression came to me the whole earth would hear that blast! Immediately following this mighty sound of the trumpet, there came a voice, the voice of the archangel Gabriel. It sounded out most clear and strong and carried perfectly. Every radio station on earth had been attracted by the blast. Now ten thousand times ten thousand ears were listening for anything and all that might follow. It came. Gabriel, with one foot upon the sea, and one foot upon the earth, raised his hand and said, "By Him that liveth forever, who created Heaven, and the things that are therein, and the earth, and the things that are therein, and the sea, and the things which are therein—time shall be no longer! ETERNITY now doth dawn. The Ages upon Ages begin. All things old are now passed away. All things henceforth are new."

As Gabriel disappeared the earth seemed to

teem with angelic hosts ablaze with the glory of song, and for the first time on earth I heard the angels singing the songs of earth! I recall some of the several songs sung: "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty," "All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name," "Joy to the World the Lord is Come," and "In the Cross of Christ I Glory." And in all these, and still others, the saints of earth joined with the angels, until it seemed to me there was one mighty mass of heavenly music, even greater than that I had heard on the many former occasions. Then there came a strange pause—for a few minutes unaccountable; till far out in the dim distance of space there came a response of song—sweet, soft and soul-entrancing, from the sinless lips of the unfallen creatures of God's other, always loyal, worlds; and so very distinct was the song that all the inhabitants of earth heard and rejoiced! The prayer of Jesus to the Father was now answered—all the flocks were now one! (John 10:16; 17:22). The saints of earth were at last in full harmony with all the celestial hosts of God's other worlds!

Then anew I heard John tell his own vision: "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down

from God out of Heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of Heaven, saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away. And He that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And He said unto me, Write, for these words are true and faithful. * * * And He showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and His servants shall serve Him: and they shall see His face; and His name shall be in their foreheads. And there shall be no night there: and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign forever and forever. And

He said unto me, These sayings are faithful and true: and the Lord God of the holy prophets sent His angel to show unto His servants the things which must shortly be done" (Rev. 21:1-5; 22:1-5).

O, the glory of it all! Who can tell? Certainly not this joy-intoxicated soul! Yet his task is to try. May the great and good Spirit help human infirmities, for he who writes is not writing at the time about which he writes; nor with that glorified mind and body he shall some day possess, but rather a human mind directs a human hand, holding a human pen. The only hope is in the Holy Spirit back of the human mind and hand.

It was the same dear old earth which I saw, and yet not the same, for it had been made anew. Its very face had been changed. The gradual beautifying of the surface had been seen in the last days of sin when lovely parks and submerged gardens changed rough hills and grinning gulches into things of beauty and pleasure. The earth's heart-fires had cooled. Its mountains had, in places, been leveled, while certain seas had been lost. Instead of one-fourth of the surface being land, and three-fourths water, it was now the exact reverse. On the new areas were settled the millions born during the millennium. The uninhabited parts

of the earth were also now being settled, many of the saints who had returned from the unfallen spheres having their homes thereon. Old-time cities had been marvelously improved and enlarged, while new and wonderful ones dotted the earth all over.

Jerusalem was the leading city—the capital of all the earth, while the Jews were the leading people of all nations, now united in their own God-given land, but no longer such Jews as we had known, for they, like the earth on which they lived, and the very air which they breathed, had been regenerated! And all the cities had streets, just as now; and business flourished in all of them, but with a distinctly different object. No business was now run to make money! The peoples of the earth were one family, and all members contributed time, effort, talents for the common good. All business was conducted strictly on the basis of "the Golden Rule." There were no shoddy wares. Merchandise abounded, for factories flourished. Gold glittered everywhere, while diamonds and rubies and pearls sparkled on every hand—both literally and figuratively. All markets were full of the choicest vegetables and fruits. But there were no meat markets! The last enemy, death, was a thing of the past. Nothing more on earth should ever taste death! Happy pur-

chasers thronged the streets loving and laughing and lingering along the sidewalks.

The water in each city was abundant, clear as crystal and cool without ice. No more typhoid germs lurked in water. The gardens and orchards never tired of yielding their bountiful supplies. Month by month brought new supplies. No one ate too rapidly. No foods disagreed with anyone. Instead of sickness being the rule, and there being "a nation of invalids," all were well. The physicians, druggists, undertakers and grave-diggers who had so rapidly decreased during the millennium, were now defunct. People no longer greeted each other with "Howdy do?" There was no occasion for it. No one asked, "Are you all well?" It was quite needless. There was no sudden pain by day, nor cry of agony over death by night. There were no operations needed, nor hurrying off to hospitals—for hospitals, as well as diseases, were things of the past. Men had long worked together under Providence to bring about such conditions. Science had helped. A hundred factors had figured. The change had come. We lived now in a new earth! God had made it over!

The curse of sin had ceased. Noxious grasses were gone. Briars, brambles, thorns and thistles which began to disappear in the

millennium, were supplanted by the most beautiful flowers and fruits everywhere. Droughts and freshets, storms and tempests came no more. Failure in crops could be no longer. Extremes of cold and heat were forgotten. Darkness, distress, disgrace and death were felt and feared no more. There was no night! The Shekinah of God's glorious presence with men, completely lighted the earth beyond the brightness of the moon by night or the sun by day. Frosts, once so much dreaded by farmers and horticulturists, ceased to curse the earth. Insects which often ate up more in one year than a farmer could save in five, were extinct. Birds of prey, and sly animals stealing the farmer's profits, no longer annoyed man. The fields were plowed, but the farmer did not sweat. His plow was pulled by a steel horse that did not fret. The farmer's implements were now never in a trust. All things made of iron were "cheap as dirt" since new and marvelous methods of mining had been discovered, and iron was no longer used for armour plate, cannon balls, rifles, submarines, "dreadnaughts," etc. There were, of course, no standing armies, no navies, no marines, no military nor naval schools. The police force was no longer needed. Taxes were not necessary. A huge army of peace officers had died from

disuse! All jails, penitentiaries, prisons, almshouses and reform schools had long ago been transformed into places of peaceful and constructive service.

Most wonderful pieces of civil engineering, hitherto unthought of, now provided stupendous water systems conserving the waste water for irrigation purposes and opening up the desert lands of marvelous richness and bearing qualities (Isa. 35:1, 2, 5, 7, 9). New metals had been discovered and were in general use—some so far above gold in beauty that it, now most abundant, was as common as iron formerly was. Through earthquakes, upheavals, and other earth disturbances, there were let loose many new and precious stones, while from meteoric showers there had come to our earth such gems of beauty as we had never dreamed possible. Thus gems and jewels abounded to beautify palaces and public buildings everywhere. Mansions of the rarest architecture and charming beauty were to be seen in all cities not only, but in the rural districts, by all highways, and crowning the hills of beauty, and lining the streams of loveliness. Comfort, ease, health and happiness reigned all over the earth. Social life was greatly intensified, but was free from all sloppiness, slime-pits and sinful pleasures (?). All lives were

clean, honest, sincere, successful and perfectly satisfied. Misery gave place to mirth, poverty died a natural death, crime cringed, gasped for its last breath and slunk into the regions of the doomed. No one now slaved for silver nor ground for gold. There was ample time to visit, and equal desire therefor. And the grand old saints, long back from God's glory world of sinless, shining spheres, were just as interesting now as in the beginning of their second lives on the earth. Great learning, and centuries of study in those unfallen worlds had spoiled no saint! No one had "the big head!" Arrogancy and egotism and disgusting pride afflicted none. All were kind, considerate, tender, gentle, unselfish, and quite ready to teach those who had not yet made the round of those wonderful worlds of uninterrupted development. Most gladly, too, were they aiding in the reproduction on earth of such features of other planets' civilizations as were desirable.

No one was sensitive. None took offense, and could not, perhaps, for none was offered! It made me think of Paul's charge: "Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others" (Phil. 2:4). What delicate deference for others! What charming manners! Every man had become a

gentleman, and all women were transformed into real ladies. Little children were refreshingly polite, and showed utmost respect for their seniors. There were no servants, yet all were servants of the living God, the loving Father of all.

I heard no hasty word: I noted no unforgiving spirit; I saw nothing like jealousy anywhere or in any relation. I saw men with their several wives (succeeded one the other through death—not divorce), and women with their more than one husband, and yet all was most beautifully harmonious and peaceful and satisfactory—a thing hardly possible on the old earth in Brigham Young's realm, or even in Abraham's day! Ill-will could not possibly live in such an air of perfect love. It was easily apparent that many in the old life had practiced, in giving vent to their natural tendencies of temperament and temper, the things which could not be used here. On the other hand I saw that all who had cultivated justice, unselfishness, patience, forgiveness, generosity, charity, meekness, temperance, truthfulness, candor, kindness and kindred virtues while on the old earth, found these beautiful traits splendid assets in the new life of heaven on earth.

But not only the great saints should be mentioned: there were the less known, but no less

dear, who had been ruthlessly removed from earth by death; others who had suffered in agony untold; and still others who had lingered long on beds of pain—all were here, and their lives were somehow the more subdued, the more winsome and the more worthy, really, for the fiery trials through which they had passed. This fact recalled to my mind Peter's statement, on earth so little understood, but now seen to be actually true, namely, "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: but rejoice, in as much as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when His glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy. If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon yeu" (I Peter 4: 12-14). "Perfected through suffering" (Heb. 2: 10), also came into my mind. I now easily saw how that many who had undergone so much suffering on the old earth, and humbly allowed "patience to have her perfect work" (James 1: 4) had thus become qualified and equipped for filling places of great importance and honour in the new life.

Perhaps the strangest of all the small items of the new life which deeply impressed me was

the utter absence of money! That "filthy lucre" which was so greedily sought on earth, which so many had worshipped there, was not to be seen in all the new realm of humanity glorified! There was really no need for it. It reminded me of a thing I had long forgotten, namely, the old-fashioned "log-rollings" and "house-raisings," when all the neighbours in a pioneer community gathered to help roll the logs off of the "new ground" field, or assist in raising a log house. Not one of the neighbours ever thought of charging a cent for his help. It was a neighbourly act in which all the best citizens of a community took real and commendable pride. Or, this widespread, even uniform manner of exchange in service, this combine, not now of cash, but rather of character—heads, hearts and hands combining to aid one the other—might be likened to a family affair. In any refined family there would be no thought of charging one the other for services rendered.

It was wonderful! All kinds of great and even gigantic activities were going forward daily, yet with no lack of labour, no fussing over wages, no threats to "strike," no yawning gulf of envy and hate between the builder and the builders. The owner himself would be busy helping those who now were doing work

for him. Reciprocity in love was the law I saw in smooth and perfect action. In the case of public works, all were equally interested, and all took part in doing that which would contribute to the common good, and make for the community happiness. It was just so in the stores. These seemed to be rather exchanges of wares. There was no bookkeeping. Machines registered all deals, and accounts were easily and duly squared by the records thereof, in due time each one receiving a satisfactory settlement. The coin of the new Canaan was the lucre of LOVE.

Another feature of that new life which haunts me till now, when I need twenty-five hours in each day of twenty-four that I may catch up with work long piled up, was the absence of sleep! What a present handicap it is to spend from six to ten hours inactively in sleep. What a tremendous loss this necessity has meant to our state on earth, our "parenthesis of sin" civilization. No wonder we got so far behind the unfallen spheres. Thomas Edison saw and keenly felt this handicap as worth-while work kept piling up on his broad shoulders, and by persistent practice while employed in fascinating, absorbing service for making his contribution towards the clumsy civilization of the "parenthesis of sin," re-

duced his waste (?) hours to only four! But even he, when passing the seventy-five and -six mile posts felt the protests of Nature, and has been forced to change some of his plans in order to get more sleep. But not at all so in "the new heavens and the new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness." There was no night there! Nor was it at all needed. Where beings never tire, never become ill, feel no weakness, decay is unknown and age an outcast, what need of night! Sleep and sin and night and death were a quartette of the accursed civilization—not of the celestial.

I retain vividly in my mind a little incident characteristic of the new world which constitutes our future heaven. I thought I was strolling leisurely along the street of a beautiful city in the glory land, when suddenly as I turned a corner I was confronted with a most masterful lion whose shaggy mane and towering tail and bright, shining eyes all united to impress me for a moment with the direst danger. I caught my breath! But it was only for a single second, for there beside that monster lion I saw, as if by magic, the Master Himself standing, stroking the monster as a small boy would his Newfoundland dog. And at the same moment there came along the street an innocent little child who stopped and put one

hand in the Master's, the other on the shaggy head whereon His own divine hand caressingly rested.

Elsewhere I have mentioned Churches as being used in the new earth, but let no one imagine that they were such Churches as ours of the present. In their exquisitely charming architecture they surpassed that dream of present earth beauty, the Library of Congress. At times the people assembled in them, but not on the Sabbath, for all days were now Sabbaths! But at stated times, or on call, there were congregations and services. The services of this renewed and glorified earth-life were always conducted with one single thought in mind—the glory of God! There was, therefore, little to remind me of the Church services held on earth in the old days. Into one of these services I stepped. The quiet order, the sweet solemnity, the sacred air, the peaceful reverence, all was radically different to the fussy, noisy, loud, harsh Church services of the old earth. Strange to say, all the songs were about a single theme, and that was BLOOD! Not one song I heard failed to refer in some way to the Lamb of God and His redeeming work. And when they sang, dear old saints—old only in years, for they were most vigourous and active in physical strength—would show much the

same emotion over these thrilling songs, sweet in spiritual power, as when in revivals on the old earth. Temperament had been borne into the new life, so that emotional natures here, as in the earth-life previous, would exult in adoration, and shout the praises of the Saviour in most thrilling "Hallelujahs," ringing out in joy and gladness which filled every soul with the sweetest satisfaction.

But what struck me most forcibly in all these services was the absence of prayer! Not one petition was heard. It was always praise and testimonies, and there was only one theme in song and testimony, and that was JESUS! Not one speaker referred to history, not one dealt in philosophy, no metaphysical talks did I hear in any service, nor even theology; while not one word of intimation to science did I hear. Evolution, rationalism, higher destructive criticism were never mentioned! How strange! On the old earth I had heard and read so much of these themes handled by great towering intellects, and advocated by the "advanced" scholars of the times. How my heart fairly leaped for joy, as now I recalled that on earth I had fought through all these scholarly theories and held only to one BOOK—just the Word of God!

While the only topic in all these meetings

was ever JESUS, there was absolutely no monotony, but rather sparkling variety, as speakers expressed themselves in captivating and charming words of beautiful simplicity. Here again I am forcibly reminded of the great Apostle Paul, who said, "I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ" (II Cor. 11:3).

Now and then the speaker was from another planet or it was an angel fresh from the throne of God, who spoke to the praise of Him who had left the "Father's House" and shed His blood on the earth to redeem it from sin. But whoever spoke, he spoke only and always of JESUS. In conferring with the visitors from other worlds, and with the angels from the throne, I found that this was not true of the worship on other spheres. Jesus had not died for them. He had died only for our little prodigal planet, and its one theme, throughout eternity, should be "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29). For Jesus had brought back the planet by the shedding of His blood, and had at last led home the straying prodigal.

I was beholding the climax in spiritual life. I could hear Paul saying, "Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is

natural; and afterward that which is spiritual." "The unspiritual man rejects the things of the Spirit of God, and cannot attain to the knowledge of them because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual discerneth all things, yet he himself is not understood of men. For who hath understood the mind of the Lord that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ" (I Cor. 2:14-16; Weymouth's Translation). "But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his" (Rom. 8:9). The natural man, "the flesh," has had its day. The triumph of the spiritual, the life of God in man, has come. Those who have been in love with the spiritual, and sought to live spiritual lives, have been gradually growing out of the flesh-life into the spirit-life of this beautiful and glorious new world, the Heaven of the saints on earth. To all such this is not altogether a new experience, for they have entertained Heaven in their hearts while yet on the old earth. Now the New Heaven is entertaining them! O what success of life! What triumph over sin and its horrible curse! What victory over self and its insidious demands! What glory divine in redeemed and sanctified human hearts! What superb peace

that passeth all understanding! What perfect satisfaction with the things God hath prepared for them that love Him! What supreme rapture of soul basking in the celestial light of LOVE! What intoxicating ecstasy of new life and surroundings! What praise and thanksgiving and happy hallelujahs over the fact that all this is to be ETERNAL! Glory! Glory! Glory TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST!

Who can again wail over the departing dear ones who go to be with the Lord until "the day of restitution of all things?" Who would now hold them back? Who would now begrudge them their glorious flights from one unfallen planet to another in the blazing splendours of triumphant victory over ignorance, littleness, sickness, sorrow and death? Let us mourn for those who remain. Let us rejoice for those who have slipped away to learn real life, sinless life, glorious life, and who will come back some sweet day to teach us and our fellow-man the better civilizations of worlds unacquainted with wrong and unaccustomed to sin. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them" (Rev. 14:13).

But why should I continue? Even if I would, time will not permit. Only glimpses,

little patches of glory, have been recorded. This record of the things God so graciously gave me was not intended to be complete—for eternity affairs NEVER END! The plan was to trace the slime of the serpent's trail till it ended, and then to share with the reader some of the glory, the rhapsody, the supreme ecstasy which has filled the author's heart so full at times while he wrote of looking down the vista of time into a millennium of peace, and then on and out into an eternity of bliss in the glory-world God will give us when "time is no more." The vision has literally and utterly altered the life of the writer and given to his labours a new zest, and, may God please, a new power to win men unto Him. That the book may be read by a million people, and thousands be led to prepare for things that shall soon come to pass, is the prayer of him whom God has honoured with the trust of these truths. "Wherefore, O man, prepare to meet thy God" (Amos 4:12). Prepare for the rich heritage in glory which shall be thine on forsaking sin and accepting JESUS as thy personal Saviour. Amen.

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